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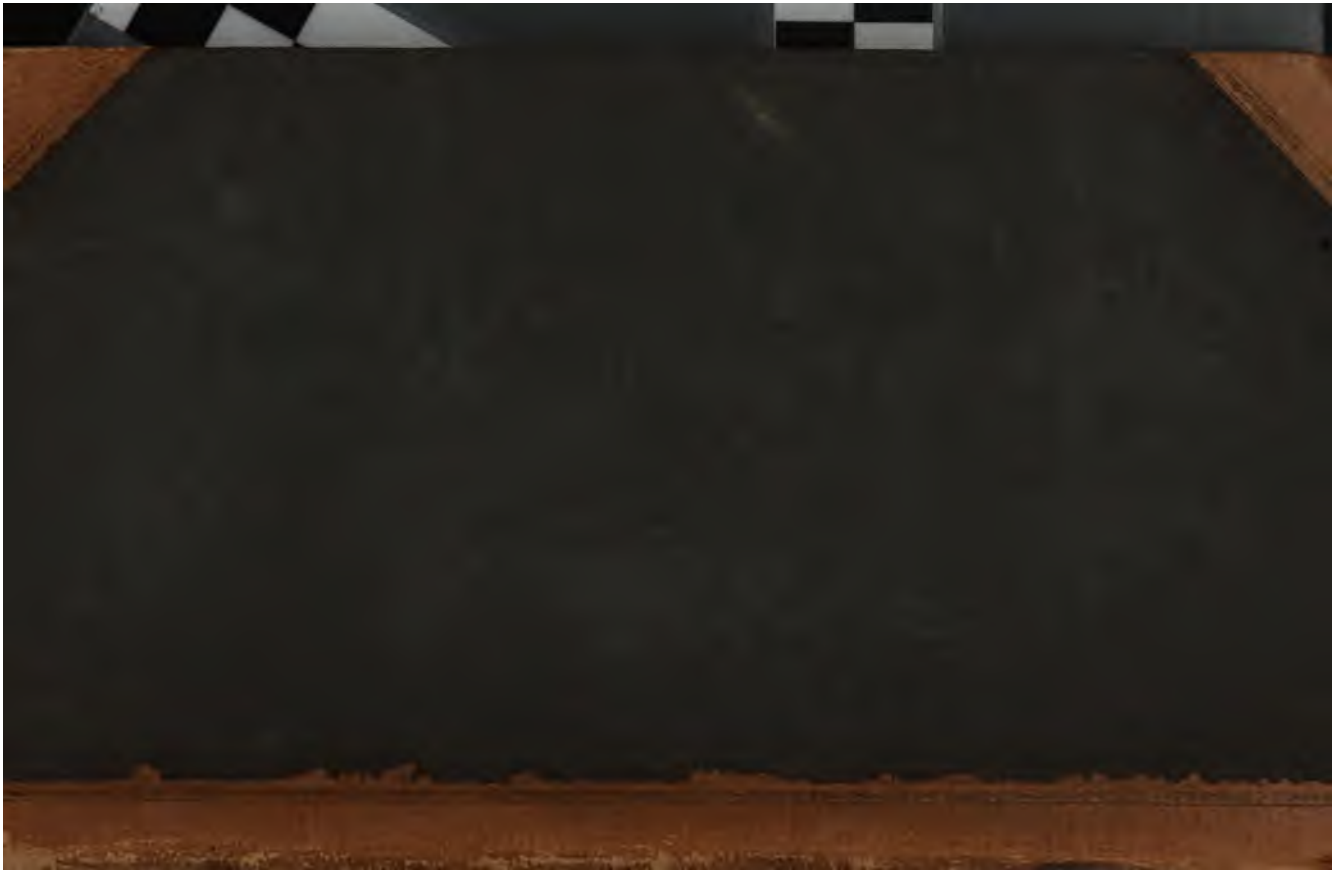

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# FLEETWOOD:

OR, THE

# NEW MAN OF FEELING.

*BY WILLIAM GODWIN.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

*LONDON:*

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# FLEETWOOD.

## CHAPTER I.

We went together to Paris, and arrived about the close of the evening. Our conversation had been eager and animated, and my companion proposed our taking up our lodging at the same inn. I was a total stranger in this great metropolis, and willingly accepted his suggestion. The strects by which we entered the capital were by no means so sumptuous as the idea of so celebrated a city had given me to expect; but I presently observed that my conductor led me away from the principal streets, and

that his route lay through many a dark passage and many an alley. The house of reception to which we repaired, corresponded to the road by which we reached it. My fellow-traveller however appeared to me to be well known to its inhabitants, and I observed various significant winks and gestures that passed between him and the hostess. After a brief supper, we were shown to a room where there were two beds.

The equivocal character of the inn in which I took up my night's repose, did not disturb me. I sought for no present splendours, and my plan through my journey had been simplicity and economy. When the candle was put out, then the train of my splendours began. My heart bounded with joy, when I thought that I was thus far toward the end of my labours. I folded my arms about me with wanton triumph, as if I would bestow upon myself an embrace

of

of congratulation. The turrets and the spires of Paris, I regarded as the emblems of my independence. In the midst of this mighty scene, the conviction came home to me with pleasure, that I belonged to no one; for, alas! said I to myself, since the death of my father, I have not seen one human creature to whom I could wish to belong! I am set loose from all compulsory connections; but I will not long be alone!

This short meditation was to me the precursor of sleep; and my slumbers were sweet and balmy. I was fatigued with my long peregrinations, and the sun was high before I roused myself from repose. When I awoke, the first thing I observed was that my companion was gone. I wonder, said I to myself, whether I shall see him again. I thought that it would full as well content me that I should not. I determined to ar-

range the particulars of my plan in my own way, and the having such a companion as this would but have interrupted and embarrassed me.

I began to dress myself. Through my whole journey, I had had the precaution to take my breeches, containing my little stock of cash, into my bed, and to place them near, or rather under, some part of my body. At first, I did not remark any difference from the morning before, and the usual appearance of things. Presently however a suspicion flashed across my mind; I passed my hand along the pocket; it went over smooth and without interruption. I felt within—there was nothing! I went to the other pocket; all was vacancy. I threw back the clothes of the bed, with a faint hope that my money was to be found there. I turned over and shook every thing: I felt in all my pockets a thousand times: I examined

in

in the same manner the bed-clothes of my fellow-traveller: I searched impossible places.

Pity me, my dear Fleetwood, pity me! Distant as is the period I am describing from the present, I can never think of this horrible event, without a twinge at the heart which I cannot describe. I was then a little, uninstructed boy, and now I am an old man, and my hairs are white; yet I cannot mention this adventure without feeling my throat dry, and my voice suffocated. Common robberies are committed upon a man, who goes home, opens his escritoire, and puts into his purse the exact sum of which he had been deprived. I had lost every thing I possessed in the world. I had just travelled two hundred and fifty miles, and was distant four hundred from the seat of my birth and my relations. All my visions, my golden dreams, my castles in the air, were demolished in a moment.

moment. What was I to do? My visions were not luxuries, were not changes of a worse state for a better; they stood between me and annihilation. I saw nothing that remained for me, but to be starved. For God's sake, turn to your Æsop; open at the fable of the Dairy-maid and her Milking-pail; blot it out, and put my adventure in its stead!

But this was not the principal aggravation of my case. Many men at many times have, no doubt, lost all that they had. But perhaps such an event never happened before to a child, entering for the first time a great metropolis, without a single friend, and four hundred miles removed from his home. Men have arms to work, and a head to contrive; they have experience, enabling them to foresee and calculate the results of a thousand schemes, and a tongue, to make good their story, to propose things which it shall be for the interest of the hearer

hearer to accept, to parley, and to demand through that species of equality which no refinement can destroy, a fair hearing. I had nothing!

I sat down, and found relief in a gush of tears. I wept, till I could weep no more, and felt myself stupified. By and by, a thought occurred, which roused me. If a man were in my place, what would he do? He would not sit still, and do nothing. I am alone in Paris; I must be my own man!

I went down stairs, and saw my hostess. Where is the person, said I, who came with me last night?

Gone—he has been gone these two hours.

Where is he gone?

I do not know.

When will he come back?

I cannot tell. I never saw him in my life before.

To

To ask these questions I was obliged to follow the landlady from side to side in the great kitchen of the inn. She seemed to be exceedingly busy, and never stood still for a moment.

Madam, said I, I have been robbed; this man has taken away all my money.

These words stopped her perpetual motion, and fixed her to the place where she stood.

Robbed, said she; this is a fine story! No such word was ever heard in my house. What business, you little rascal, had you to come with a robber to my house? Robbed! He is a highway-man, and you are his jackal. A pretty story, quotha, that you have been robbed! Such little villains as you always outwit themselves. Betty, look up the silver tea-spoons! Observe the brat! See what fine linsey-wolsey clothes he has got on! And pray, my little master,

ter, of what have you been robbed? Of a crooked copper, I warrant! Yes, I see, there are two of my silver tea-spoons gone. Step for an officer this moment! Search him! But that is in vain. The boy seizes the goods, and his companion neatly carries them off. You shall breakfast, my lad, in the *conciergerie*, upon a salt eel! Why are not you gone, Betty?

I own I was now terrified, in a very different style from any thing I had felt in the presence of the mayor of Dijon. I believed that the house I was in, was appropriated to the consultations of robbers. I had observed the signals of intelligence which had passed on the preceding evening between my fellow-traveller and the hostess, and now she denied that she had ever before seen him in her life. I did not doubt that the story of the tea-spoons was a concerted fabrication, chosen as the most effectual means of quashing my com-

plaint respecting the loss of my property. But what chance had I, an unprotected child, without a friend, and without a name, of being able to make good my own cause, and defeat the malicious accusation which was threatened against me! This was an intolerable addition to the shock I had just felt in finding myself unexpectedly left without a penny. The whole recurred to my mind at once, and, though already exhausted with weeping, I burst afresh into a flood of tears.

Betty, a plump and fresh-coloured girl of nineteen, felt her bowels yearn with compassion for my case. Pray, madam, said she, do not be too hard upon this little boy. I dare say he knows nothing of the tea-spoons.

I dare say no such thing! replied the mistress fiercely.

Upon my soul, madam, if you will send him to prison, you may go for an

officer yourself. I will have nothing to do with it. For my part, I wonder what your heart is made of, to think of such a thing.

Go, you are a fool!—Well, let him get out of my house! Let him tramp, as fast as his ten toes can carry him! If ever I catch him again, I will have no more mercy upon him, than I would upon the claw of a lobster!—Be gone, you gallows little rascal! Off with you!

I took advice of the relentings of the good woman, and decamped. I know not why however, I was by no means eager to leave the street in which she lived. I felt as if in her house I had left behind me that property, which had been so essential to my projects. I began to suspect that, notwithstanding her loudness and apparent fury, the mention of the *conciergerie* was a trick, and that all her aim had been to get me out of her territories. This however, if true, would

by

by no means mend the case: it was impossible that I should obtain redress.

It was well for me that I lingered in my pace. I had not departed above two minutes, before I felt some one tap me upon the shoulder. It was my friend, Betty, the bar-maid. She held in her hand a pretty substantial roll of bread ready buttered, which she presented to me. She chucked me under the chin; and, after an expressive God bless you, my brave lad! she tripped away by the path by which she came.

The offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh, presented by the wise men of the East, were not more acceptable to the mother of Jesus, than this homely roll and butter were to me at this moment. Yet I was not hungry by sensation; my heart was too full of the crosses I had sustained: but I was hungry by reflection. This is a distinction that will be perfectly intelligible to every one,

one, however heart-full, who shall suppose himself alone for the first time in an immense metropolis, without a morsel of bread, or the means of procuring it.

Poor Betty's roll and butter proved to me nectar and ambrosia in one. I did not eat it immediately; but, in proportion as I did, I felt my spirit revive within me. To have been left without comfort and without food at this critical period, might have been fatal to me. But the courage of a child, the sunshine of his soul, is easily called back; and, when the animal feeling of inanition was extinguished within me, something friendly seemed to whisper to me not to despair. I had conquered the greatest part of the distance; I was only twelve miles from Versailles. A walk of four hours would bring me to that place, which I had regarded as the assured goal of my lasting prosperity.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER II.

No sooner did the thought occur to me, than I resolved to lose no time to realise it. I arrived at Versailles about the middle of a very hot day, broiling with the sun, and covered with dust. I immediately entered the park; and, having gained a favourable situation for viewing the palace, protected by the shadow of overhanging trees, I threw myself upon the grass. The first idea that struck me was, Versailles is infinitely grander and more magnificent than Fontainebleau. With my eye I measured the piles, surveyed the architecture, and remarked the moveable and immoveable objects around me.

Shortly however I forgot myself, and fell asleep. Yes, arrived at my haven, and

and with every thing for which I had panted apparently within my ken, I fell asleep! Heat and fatigue contributed to this; but I apprehend I should not have been thus overtaken, if it had not been for the misfortunes which that morning had overtaken me. A mitigated and familiar sorrow blunts the faculties, and disposes to lethargy.

I had not slept long before I was roused from my oblivion by the sound of a fife, and the passing along of a file of soldiers. This was to me a most agreeable moment. I shook myself, and gazed intently upon the men as they passed. I recognised in them, as I stood still to view, the physiognomy of my native country. While I lived at home in the canton of Uri, I was unaware of the existence of this physiognomy; the particulars which distinguished the persons around me from each other, were more remarked by me, than those in which

which they resembled. But my residence at Lyons had sharpened my perceptions in this respect. Every man loves his native soil; and the Swiss are said to have more of this sentiment than any other people. I had myself been in a state of banishment, and, as I may phrase it, a state of solitary imprisonment. Whenever I met a Swiss in the streets of Lyons, my little heart leaped within my bosom, and I could not help hailing him as a brother in the peculiar phraseology of my country. My salutation never failed to call forth a cheerful and affectionate response from the person to whom it was addressed. This was usually all that occurred: we mutually bade each other Good-day; and passed on. Yet this kind of encounter often furnished me with an intellectual feast for a whole day; it made the sun shine upon me through the opake windows of the silk-mill, and cheered my

soul as I stood at the swifts. An accident of this nature did not fail to happen to me twenty times during my abode at Lyons, and perhaps with as many different persons.

It had been one of the motives that secretly stimulated me in my project upon the king of France, that I knew that the favourite guards of his court were Swiss, and that, when I came there, I should feel so much the less a stranger, as I should be able to speak, and address my enquiries, to my own countrymen. To a poor, destitute and pennyless vagabond, it was at this moment like heaven, to gaze upon the countenances of a little cluster of my countrymen, at the same time that I recollected that I was four hundred miles distant from my native home. It was like Macbeth gazing upon the descendants of Banquo, except that, though the view in each instance was pregnant with emotion,

my

my emotions were of a nature opposite to his: every countenance, as it passed in series and succession before me, gave new sting to my pleasure, and elevated my heart an inch the higher. I said to myself, These men will surely be my friends; removed as we are from the spot where nature produced us, they will feel that here I belong to them; they will not leave a poor Swiss child to perish for hunger within their quarters. —It was a restoration from death to life.

As they proceeded along in a sort of parade, I dared not on this occasion address them with my customary salutation. I resolved to wait, till I could meet with one of them not upon duty, and alone. It was not necessary for me to wait long. As I strayed about the park, I met with a respectable looking man, a private, with an infant in his arms. I saluted him, and we entered into

into conversation. He seemed surprised at seeing me there, and asked me whether I belonged to any of the companies on duty at Versailles. I told him nearly the same particulars of my story, as I had communicated to the mayor of Dijon. I said, I was the son of a Swiss, and that I was born at home. My parents had brought me up in ease and opulence; but they were now dead, and, having left me, their only child, to the care of an uncle, this treacherous guardian had turned me adrift upon the world. Agreeably to my former resolution, I did not mention Lyons, and I abstained from violating the secret which my uncle had so tremendously enjoined me. I concluded however with my adventure of that morning, and the loss of all that I had.

The honest Swiss believed my story. He seated me by him on a bench, and put the child on his knee; and, in token of

of his sympathy with my adventures, took me affectionately by the hand, when I had concluded my little narrative. He uttered several exclamations, and made several remarks, upon the particulars as I related them; but, as his remarks were those of a common soldier, and his understanding, as I presently perceived, was in no respect superior to his station, they are not worth mentioning. He observed, that he was afraid I had not eaten that day.

Not a morsel, except the roll and butter given me by Betty, the bar-maid.

God bless you, my boy! exclaimed he with some emotion, come home along with me, and you shall at least partake of the fare, such as it is, that I have provided for my wife and children.

I willingly accepted his invitation, and we went together. As we entered the little apartment of his family, My love, said he, here is a poor Swiss boy, just come

come from his own country, and without a penny in his pocket: you must give him a little supper, and he shall stay with us to-night. The wife was no less prompt in exercising this small hospitality than her husband. They had three sons, beside the infant; and we sat round a cheerful board together.

I seized this opportunity of asking the soldier a variety of questions concerning the king, which he regarded probably as the mere curiosity of a stranger. He told me, that the king was not at present at Versailles, but had been for some days at Marli, which place he principally frequented for the diversion of hunting. I enquired into the situation of this place, and was pleased to find that it was only four or five miles from Versailles. I set off for Marli early the next morning.

When I arrived, I found the king had gone forth already to his hunt, and probably would not return till the day was con-

considerably advanced. A Swiss soldier gave me my breakfast at Marli, as the private at Versailles had entertained me the evening before. This man was a being of more reflection than the former; and, when I had owned that I was without money, pressed me to inform him what was my errand at Marli, and what prospects I had for the future. This generous anxiety and forecast warmed my heart: the deliberating benevolence of an ordinary soldier, however narrow may be his power, is not less interesting to the feelings, than that of a lord. I begged him however to excuse me; I intreated him to give himself no concern about me; and assured him that, though I was destitute now, I had means of speedily putting an end to my distress.

I broke away from this man as soon as I decently could, and wandered about the park and gardens. I saw him two

or

or three times in the course of the day, and once passed so near a sentry-box where he was on duty, that he had an opportunity in a low voice to desire me to come again to his hut, when his business of the day should be over. At length I heard the sound of clarinets and horns, the signal of the return from hunting. I saw the hounds, and heard the trampling of horses; and presently the cavalcade appeared. The sound and the sight were cheerful, and my bosom was in tumults. Suddenly I recollected myself, and started away for the door, of which I had previously gained information, where the king was to alight. Several attendants and lacqueys pressed to the same spot. I saw the persons on horseback alight, and, coming up to one of them, cried with earnestness and enthusiasm, Sire, hear what I have to say, and listen to my prayer! In the confusion of my mind, I had mistaken the individual,

dividual, in spite of my precaution of the portrait: it was not the king. The nobleman to whom I spoke, exclaimed, What, what is all this? the lacqueys hurried me out of the circle; the king alighted, and the scene was closed.

I know not whether it will appear incredible that a child as I was should have been capable of this daring. It was in reality perhaps because I was a child, that I was capable of it. I understood very imperfectly the distinctions of rank in artificial society. I was wholly ignorant of the forms and fences which are set up to separate one man from the rest of his brethren. A king to the imagination of a child is but a man; and I was accustomed, as perhaps all boys are accustomed, to meet him in fancy in the fields and the highways, and to conceive him a guest in my father's house. The first time I ever beheld a peacock's feather, I found something royal in it; and

a man

a man wearing a peacock's feather upon his bosom would to me have been a king. Add to which, I had never disclosed my plan to a human creature. Timidity is the child of experience or of admonition. I was not without timidity in the present instance; I understood the degree of presumption there was in addressing a gentleman and a stranger; and I understood no more.

If I set out in my project with these notions, my courage was considerably reinforced as I proceeded. I had meditated my project perpetually, till enthusiasm supplied the place of intrepidity. I had so often acted the scene over in my fancy that the whole was become perfectly familiar: it was like some situations which perhaps every man has encountered in life, new and extraordinary in themselves, but which feel like recollections, and he exclaims, This is my dream! Recollect, in addition to

these things, the urgency of my condition, the desperateness of my fortune, my hatred to the silk-mills of Lyons, the long journey I had performed, the hard adventures I had encountered, the emptiness of my purse, the immediate cravings of nature. All these things goaded me forward, and made me look upon the ignominy of deliberation as the worst of evils.

In the evening the king walked upon the terrace in the gardens. I informed myself exactly of his appearance and insignia, that I might make no second mistake. There was a flight of about fifty steps that led up to the terrace; and guards were placed upon a landing-place in the middle, and at the bottom. These guards were not Swiss, but French. I had reflected, and found this spot the most favourable in the world for the execution of my project. The king, I was told, usually walked here for an hour,

hour, and conversed familiarly with a variety of persons. I approached to ascend, but was stopped by the soldiers. My garb was mean, and they told me, a boy of my appearance could not go up there! I was filled with impatience. There was a similar flight of steps at the other end of the terrace; I burst away from these persons, and hastened to the second flight. Here I was stopped again. Repeated disappointments now made me desperate, and I struggled with the soldiers, in the vain hope to pass in spite of their efforts. An attendant who passed by, recognised me for the child who had endeavoured to speak with the king before dinner. This circumstance induced them to conduct me to the guard-house. A child, as I was, they took for granted could not be a dangerous intruder; but it was their business to keep off impertinence, and prevent his majesty from being disturbed.

The soldier who took me under his care asked me, with some degree of kindness, What I wanted, and what purpose I had in view in speaking to the king? But I was now grown sullen, and would only answer in gloomy monosyllables. After some time, I was conducted to the gate of the park, and thrust out into the high road. The soldiers left me, and I sat down upon a stone.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER III.

HERE my reflections were sufficiently melancholy. I would have returned, if I had been able, to the hut of the centinel who had invited me; but that was unfortunately within the inclosure. What was I to do? I was by no means cured of my project of speaking to the king. How bitter were my rage and indignation against the villain who had stripped me of the trifling sum of money on which I had depended! I wanted, I thought, but a little time; but how was I to gain time, when I was without food? The objection I had heard made against me, was the meanness of my clothing: if my money had not been taken from me, I could have removed this objection. My ruminations were inexpressibly melancholy.

lancholy. As I sat, several gentlemen passed me, who had probably made part of the company in the royal promenade. I must endeavour to obtain from some one the means of appeasing the demands of hunger. Should I apply to these? There was nothing in their appearance that invited me. Moved by my experience of the past, I was inclined to wait till I could see a soldier and a fellow-countryman. Yet of what avail was the relief I could so obtain? I had not come hither to subsist upon the precarious charity of daily bread! Far different views had animated my steps in a course of three hundred miles! What was I to do to-morrow? At Marli I should find myself marked, and watched, and thwarted in all my attempts. When would the king return to Versailles?

Those of the persons who passed me and were on foot, passed me by twos and threes. Others went in carriages and on horse-

horseback. At length one gentleman came alone. He looked at me, and advanced to the place where I sat.

My boy, said he, are not you the little fellow that attempted to speak to the king?

I looked up at the gentleman. He was beyond the middle period of human life. I thought I had never seen so benign a countenance. Besides, there was something in him that struck me with a remarkable similarity to my own father.

I am, sir, answered I with a sigh.

And what could you want to say to the king?

I am friendless: I have nobody to take care of me: I wanted to tell him that.

Was your father a military man? Did he wear the *croix de St. Louis?*

My father was no military man: he was never in France in his life.

Good

rish for want of food; or, if not, without guide or protector, and with no means of present subsistence, to become the associate of the worthless and the vile, the only persons, probably speaking, who would court such an associate. Oh, how infinitely worse would this have been, than the most unpitied death!—The king of France!—was ever poor wretch misled by such an *ignis fatuus*? did ever condemned criminal brave the fury of the ocean in such a cockle-shell?

I repaired at the appointed hour to the residence of my new protector. He asked me a number of questions; and I gave him the same answers, but with more of detail than I had given on previous occasions. He was urgent in his enquiries; he spoke to me in the most friendly and soothing manner; I was on the brink of discovering my secret; I intreated him however to spare me:

me: I had been robbed by my uncle; but I did not dare to tell, where and who he was. The generous Englishman perceived that I gasped and turned pale, as I touched on this tremendous subject. He became deeply interested in my behalf.

Will you go with me to my own country? said he.

Oh, no, no! If you are so much my friend as to be willing to take me thither, then—pray, pray, sir!—do for me the thing I want; enable me to change these clothes for others more suitable to my projects.

I raved of the king of France. The scheme of applying to him had been my favourite contemplation for months. I had had his picture so often before me! The thought of him had soothed my weary steps, and comforted me under all my disasters. I could not give up my plan. I could not divest myself of the

sort.

sort of robe of nobility with which my fancy had clothed me, and descend into the vale of ordinary life. I intreated my benefactor with miraculous and unpacified importunity that he would direct all his assistance to this end.

Enthusiasm is always an interesting spectacle. When it expresses itself with an honest and artless eloquence, it is difficult to listen to it, and not in some degree to catch the flame. Particularly at my age it was so extraordinary in itself, and so impetuous in its way of manifesting itself, that it was impossible to contemplate it without sympathy. There are so many ways in which the heart of man conceals itself from man! Beside the thousand motives which impel us to suppress one thing, and to be reserved respecting another, it is necessary that the human mind should be put into motion in order to its being seen. Speak, that I may see thee! said the ancient philo-

philosopher. He might have added, Speak upon some subject, respecting which your feelings are spontaneous and strong. The soul of man is one of those subtle and evanescent substances, that, as long as they remain still, the organ of sight does not remark; it must be agitated, to become visible. All together, Mr. Fleetwood grew exceedingly anxious respecting my welfare.

On this account he condescended to a certain degree of artifice and temporising. He observed to me that I had ruined my own project at Marli, and that it would be ten days before the king removed to Versailles. He invited me to spend this time with him at Paris, during which I should be clothed and equipped more suitably to the great person I designed to address. He promised me that I should have the earliest intelligence of the removal of the court.

In how new a situation was I now unexpectedly

expectedly placed! I had not heard the accents of genuine kindness for almost two years; not since the calamitous moment, when my father uttered his expiring breath. Mr. Fleetwood, almost from the first, conceived for me the affection of a father. He did not treat me as a vagabond whom he had taken up out of charity, and keep me at a distance from him. I saw him, morning, noon and night. His accents were those of friendly solicitude; the looks I cast upon him were those of affection. My spirit was softened within me: my new situation took away from me the heart of stone, and gave me a heart of flesh.

It was this heart of stone, if you will allow me so to express myself, that led me to the king of France. It was the sentiment of despair: I had sent my enquiring glances round the world, and had not found a friend. Methodically and slowly I had worked myself up to the

the resolution I had adopted, and I could not immediately abandon it. It was a sort of frenzy, a high pitch of the soul, foreign to its natural temper. Kindness, the perpetual attention and interest of a real friend, in no long time brought me back to myself. It is impossible to express what comfort, what a delicious relaxation and repose of spirit, was produced by this revolution. Mr. Fleetwood gradually led me to consider the scheme I had formed, as wild, senseless and impracticable. His expostulations were so gentle, benignant and humane, that, while they confuted, they had not the effect of mortifying me. He took me with him to England.

I have been thus minute in the description of my condition at Lyons, and of the manner of my deserting it, that I might the better demonstrate to you the infinite value of the kindness your grandfather bestowed on me. If I had not been

been the most unfortunate, the most abused, and the most deserted of my species, the favours I received would not have had a tithe of the value they actually possessed. I cannot recollect the situation I deserted, or that upon which I threw myself, without a horror bordering on despair. The generous and admirable mortal that then interposed for my relief, I must ever regard as my guardian genius, and my better angel. How distinctly have I passed over in my mind ten thousand times the stone upon which I sat at the gate of the park of Marli, and the gesture and countenance with which my preserver approached me! The day was declining, the landscape had assumed the grave and uniform hues of evening, and there was that sadness in the air which wakes up the tone of sensibility in the soul. The circumstances in which I was placed, sufficiently prepared me to be deeply affected. The first word

word that Ambrose Fleetwood uttered went to my heart. I had occasionally perhaps been treated during my journey with gentleness and civility: but it was the difference between the voice that tells you which turn you are to take in the road from Auxerre to Sens, and the voice that tells you by implication that the speaker is interested that you shall go right in the road of happiness and life.—With what considerate wisdom did this noble Englishman soothe me in the midst of the exalted and enthusiastic fervour which had brought me to Versailles and Marli! How patiently did he wean me from the wild plan upon which my heart was bent! And all this to an unknown and pennyless vagabond! There is perhaps more merit in this temper, that listened to all my extravagancies without anger, and did not suffer itself to be discouraged

debted, for the habit of regarding the names of my father and my uncle as the most inviolable of secrets.

At length I became convinced by the unaltered kindnesses of my benefactor, that my secret would be no less safely reposed in his keeping, than in the recesses of my own soul. I told him the whole. He was astonished at the terror with which I had looked forward to the disclosure, and proposed immediately to take such measures as should operate to compel my uncle to resign his ill-gotten wealth. I intreated him that he would engage in no proceedings of that sort; I reminded him of his promise that my secret should never be communicated to a third person without my consent. My uncle, however deeply he had injured me, was still the brother of my father, and in that quality I could not but feel reluctance at the idea of exposing him to public igno-

ignominy. The menaces with which he had so emphatically dismissed me, were still impressed on my heart; they gave me a horrible anticipation of the event which would attend my hostile return to my native land; and I could not help apprehending that that event would be miserable to me, no less than to him. I implored your grandfather that he would suffer the question to remain unopened, at least till I had arrived at a mature age. He had often assured me that, having only one son, he did not regard the expences I brought on him as a burthen; but, if he did, I did not desire the situation he provided for me, or the advantages he bestowed; the tithe of his benefits would amply satisfy my ambition and my wishes. To occasion an entire revolution in the fortunes and situation of my family, was a very serious consideration; it might be the most important transaction of my life; and I ear-

earnestly intreated that in such a transaction I might be allowed to consult the ripest decisions of my own understanding. Your grandfather generously yielded to these representations.

The principal friend I had in England, after my original benefactor, was your father. We were nearly of an age, and your grandfather brought us up together. I saw in him the image of the man who had rescued me from utter destruction, and loved him accordingly. Your father was acquainted with my situation, and knew that I had no claim either of blood or alliance upon my preserver: he saw me brought up with himself, and enjoying the same advantages; yet he never repined at the favour in which I was held. Not only while we were children together, he regarded me as a brother; but this sentiment never altered in him as he advanced in judgment and years. He never looked upon me as an intruder;

never

never considered the large sums your grandfather laid out to procure me a respectable footing in life; nor even enquired whether, as I equally shared the bounties of my benefactor at present, he might not make a distribution of his property at death no less impartial. Could I help loving so disinterested and noble-minded a companion?

Having been perfectly initiated in the principles of commerce in the country where they are best understood, it happened that, about the time when it was proper I should be launched in the world, a proposition was made to the elder Fleetwood, respecting a banking-house which it was in contemplation to set up at Lisbon. A countryman of my own was the principal in the project; but his capital was not sufficient for the undertaking as it had been chalked out, and he designed taking in one or two other persons as partners with him in the con-

concern. Provided he could enter upon the affair in the way which had been delineated, he had the promise of being immediately installed as banker to the court of Portugal. Your grandfather was an opulent London merchant, and had no inclination to extend his concerns. His son he destined for his successor in the business in which he was himself engaged. Under these circumstances he thought of embracing the proposal in my behalf.

I was never more surprised than when the idea was suggested to me. The money necessary to be advanced, was more than three times the amount which my father's property would have produced, if it had been all sold immediately on the event of his death. I was suffocated with the thought of so incredible a generosity exercised toward me. I told my benefactor that I was as far from the expectation as the wish of be-

coming opulent, and that, independently of a secret feeling which led me to the hope of one day settling in my native fields, I could be contented to remain for ever the first clerk in my preserver's counting-house.

Your grandfather answered me, that he much disapproved of a character deficient in enterprise, and asked, how the humility of the views I at present professed, accorded with the ardour which had formerly led me to throw myself at the feet of the sovereign of France? He said, I had with my own consent passed through all the stages of a commercial education, and that therefore it seemed but reasonable, that whatever enterprise I possessed, should be directed into that channel. He expatiated upon the uses of wealth, and observed that, however limited might be my desire of indulgences for myself, I ought by no means to forget the great public works which an

opulent man might forward for the benefit of his species, or how extensive was his power of relieving distress, of exciting industry, of developing talents, of supplying the means of improvement to those who panted for, but could not obtain them, and of removing the innumerable difficulties which often surrounded the virtuous and the admirable, which impeded their progress, and struck despair into their hearts.

My benefactor recommended to me to make myself perfectly easy, as to the money necessary to be advanced, to launch me in the undertaking proposed. He could spare it without the smallest inconvenience. If my views in life were unsuccessful, it should never be repaid, and he should then have the satisfaction of having exerted himself liberally to establish in life a youth, whom he loved no less than his own son. But he had no doubt that the undertaking would be pro-

prosperous; and then he consented, if that would be any gratification to me, that I should repay the present loan, only upon one condition, that the first installment of the repayment should not commence till that day seven years, counting from the day of my landing in Lisbon: young men, who entered upon business with a borrowed capital, had often received a fatal check in the midst of the fairest prospects, by a premature repayment of the loan which had originally set them afloat on the ocean of life.

Ruffigny, continued your grandfather, what miserably narrow notions are these which you seem to have fostered in your bosom! Are all the kindnesses of the human heart to be shut up within the paltry limits of consanguinity? My son will have enough; and I am sure he will not repine, that you should be made a partaker of the opulence with which providence has blessed me. If you will,

we will ask him, and I will do nothing for you that has not his entire and undissembled approbation. Why should I not set up two persons in the world, instead of one? Thirty-six princes, we are told, erected each of them a pillar in the temple of Diana at Ephesus: why should I not erect two pillars in the edifice of human happiness, and prepare two persons, instead of one, to be benefactors of their species? You are my son, a son whom the concourse of sublunary events has given me, no less dear to me than the heir of my body. I found in you various estimable qualities, which won my attachment in the first hour I saw you; and I trust, those qualities have lost nothing in the cultivation I have given them. You belonged to me, because you belonged to no one else. This is the great distribution of human society; every one who stands in need of assistance appertains to some one individual,

dividual, upon whom he has a stronger claim than upon any other of his fellow-creatures. My son belongs to me, because I was the occasion of his coming into existence; you belong to me, because you were hungry and I fed you, because you wanted education and a protector and have found them in me. You are now arrived at man's estate, and I regard you as the creature of my vigilance and of my cares. Will you not acknowledge me for a father?

I was convinced by the arguments of my preserver; I was moved by the feelings he expressed: my beloved companion, the brother of my heart, declared most warmly his consent to the arrangement. I resided twenty-one years at Lisbon; and in that time, by honourable and just traffic, made a fortune infinitely beyond the most sanguine of my wishes. I faithfully repaid to my benefactor, at the time he had himself limited, the capital

pital he advanced to me. During the period of my residence at Lisbon, I several times came over to England, and visited the two persons whom I reasonably regarded as the most generous of mortals; and in one of these visits, after I had been ten years engaged as a principal in my commercial undertaking, I witnessed the expiring breath of my original benefactor. Never perhaps did I love a human creature, as I loved that man. My father, good and kind and affectionate as he had been, was to my mind a sort of air-drawn vision, the recollection as it were of a preexistent state. My youthful companion and sworn confident, no less generous than my preserver, was inexpressibly dear to me; but the sentiment I felt for him was altogether different. Nature has formed us to the love of the venerable. Filial affection is an instinct twined with the very fibres of our heart. For the

grey hairs of your grandfather I had a mystical and religious awe; and age had softened his features into an expression of such calm benignity, that, if I were an adherent of the sect of the anthropomorphites, I should take from his countenance my idea of the object of my worship.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER IV.

I SHOULD have told you that, about the time of my original departure for Lisbon, your grandfather settled with my consent a correspondence with a citizen of Zurich, upon whose integrity and discretion he could perfectly rely: he observed that, whatever forbearance I might think proper to exercise toward my uncle and his family, it was but reasonable that I should obtain from time to time information of his affairs, and learn which of the family were living and dead. I have already said that my uncle had been unprosperous in all his undertakings: the estate of my father which he so wickedly seized, by no means introduced a better fortune into his affairs. One by one his children died; he survived them, but survived not long; and the estate fell in the twentieth

twentieth year of my residence at Lisbon (for it was understood that I was dead; and my uncle procured vouchers to establish the fact) to a distant branch of my father's family.

Circumstances were now sufficiently favourable to the project upon which my wishes were bent, of returning to my native country, and spending the remainder of my days in the valley which had given me birth. I communicated my purpose to my correspondent at Zurich; but I was somewhat divided in my mind, whether I should purchase my paternal estate, and live upon it as a stranger, or should openly claim it as my rightful inheritance. What inclined me to the former was, that by this expedient I should avoid casting any slur upon the memory of my false guardian. Our family had always ranked among the most patriotic families of the Union, and had never sustained any dishonour, except in

the person of my uncle. On the other hand, I could not bear the idea of appearing as a foreigner in my own country: this was but a half-restoration. Why did I love my country? Not merely for that its scenes had been familiar to my infancy; but that the human mind irresistibly wishes to connect itself with something. I had ancestors, the ornaments of the people among whom they were born. These ancestors had married and given in marriage, had received and conferred obligations and benefits, and their memory was in odour and in favour through the neighbouring districts. I wished to adorn my ancestors, and to be adorned by them. This is the genuine idea of going to one's home.

I was averse however to the idea of appearing in my own country in the character of a litigant, an individual unexpectedly calling his neighbour into contest about a property

a property of which he believed himself to be lawfully possessed. I therefore instructed my correspondent to bring this question to a full decision, before I should take my departure. My resolution was formed, as soon as I received intelligence of the death of my uncle. I immediately transmitted documents to Zurich, proving my parentage and identity, and directed my correspondent to serve the new claimant with a notice, that the true heir, who was supposed to be dead, was still living. He was exceedingly surprised, and somewhat chagrined with the intelligence, as he was a poor man, and burthened with a numerous family. He consented however after the manner of the country, to go before the chief court of the canton, for the decision of the question. After a full and minute investigation of the evidences, my claim was ultimately established. This point being gained, I dispatched to Zurich an instru-

instrument, settling on the losing party in the contest, an annuity to one half of the value of the property of which he was dispossessed, accompanied with bills of exchange destined to repurchase the lands which my uncle had sold, and to redeem them from the burthens he had laid upon them. These objects were in most instances happily accomplished.

While my affairs were going on thus auspiciously in Switzerland, I employed the time necessary for maturing them, in adjusting and transferring in the most advantageous manner the commercial undertakings, in which more than twenty years of my life had been consumed, in Portugal. When every concern of this sort was now completed, and all things prepared for my reception in my native canton, I bade farewel to Lisbon, and prepared to return to Switzerland by way of London.

My business in England was to visit your

your father. I found him the same in tastes, in moral dispositions, and in affection, as his father's death had left him. In many respects he was different. Ten years of added life had brought him to a nearer resemblance of my original preserver; and, as I remarked in him the tokens of advancing age, I felt the agreeable sentiment of contemplating my venerable benefactor and my schoolboy associate blending themselves, as it were, in one person. Your father had also married since I was in England, and yourself was born. I think I never saw so affectionate a husband and a father. In domestic life it was impossible to be more fortunate than I found my beloved friend.

He was not equally fortunate in every thing. He had experienced two or three severe miscarriages in his commercial concerns, and this, so far as I could understand, without the smallest fault

fault on his part. In one instance he had connected himself with, and given large credit to, a house, where all appearances were fair, but where extravagance and secret gaming brought about a ruin, the most sudden and unforeseen. In another instance a war had broken out at a time when he apprehended no such thing; his transactions were multiplied in the country which was now declared an enemy; and all his investments failed. At a different time bankruptcy upon an extensive scale took place in Holland, one great house drawing on the ruin of another, till half the most opulent merchants of the republic were destroyed: your father suffered deeply in this calamity.

I soon discovered a cast of melancholy in the demeanour of my quondam playmate, and that there was something which hung painfully on his mind. In truth I had somewhat suspected his real

real situation before I left Lisbon, and this contributed with other circumstances to hasten my conclusion of my affairs in that city. With difficulty and effort I wrung from your father a full confession of his misfortune.

Ruffigny, said he, I am a beggar. You and I set out together in life, but under different auspices.—He paused.

No matter, added he. I hope I shall be able to discharge all my debts to the uttermost. A trifle will remain to me from the wreck. I will venture no more upon the treacherous sea of commerce. What is the value of riches? I shall still have enough left, to retire with to some remote corner of the island, and cultivate a small farm in tranquillity. My dear wife will be perfectly contented with the exchange. She will give up her equipage and her liveries without a murmur. She will not sigh for the amuse-

ments

ments of the court and the metropolis; and she will look more beautiful in my eyes clad in the plain attire of a rural housewife, than hung round as I have seen her, with diamonds and rubies. My son shall be a peasant swain, not ignorant, not ambitious, viewing the storms of life from a distance, and fearless of bankruptcies, shipwrecks and war. Is not this happiness?

Your father never dropped a syllable which should sound toward the asking me to assist him in his adversity. He knew my ability in this respect, and the prosperous event which had crowned my efforts. Perhaps he would have been willing to have made another experiment in the affairs of commerce, and not to have quitted the world a bankrupt, had he known where to have raised a sum adequate to his purpose, and upon terms sufficiently eligible. But all that I had

I had I derived from the bounty of your grandfather, and this consideration sealed up his lips toward me.

One morning I came to him early, and requested him to assist me in casting up the profits of my commerce, and the amount of my fortune. He turned upon me a wistful eye, as I stated my proposal. At first sight it seemed to imply an insulting comparison between my success and his. On the other hand he perhaps half suspected the true meaning of my visit.

Come, my dear Fleetwood, said I; my affairs are in good order, and the task will not occasion you much trouble.

Saying this, I opened again the door by which I had entered, and called to my servant to come in. He brought with him three or four pocket-books, and a box. He put them down, and departed.

Let us sit down!

I opened

I opened the pocket-books, and explained their contents. Some were bills of exchange; some were warrants of capital in the English and Dutch stocks; and some securities of various sorts. I explained to my friend, the nature of the commerce in which I had been engaged, the profits from year to year, and the particulars of one or two fortunate speculations. I took pen and ink, and summed together the amount of my bills, warrants and securities.

I then pushed aside the pocket-books, and drew toward me the black box. This, said I, I regard as peculiarly my own. It contained the evidences of my birth and identity, the sentence of the judge who had awarded to me my estate, the ejectment of the late possessor, and the titles of the landed property which my agent had purchased for me in Switzerland.

As I have now quitted trade, resumed I, and

I, and am going to retire from the world, I have been trying to make my will. Here it is, pulling a pretty large parcel from my pocket: I will leave it with you, Fleetwood; peruse it at your leisure. One thing only I have to say; I do not show it you to consult you upon it; I am peremptory in its contents, and will not alter a letter; but, between such old friends as we are, I think it right you should be acquainted with all my thoughts.

Is it your will? said your father.

Pooh, said I, smiling, do not let us deal in quibbles and disputes about a word! If however I must come to definitions, I will tell you, that by a will I understand a paper or parchment, containing my final and irrevocable disposition of that property over which the municipal laws of Europe give me an empire; and to tell you the truth, I hold a man's making his will and the different pro-

provisos it contains, to be one of the most sacred and indispensible duties he can perform, and one of those circumstances which may best serve as a criterion to distinguish the honest man and the knave, the man of narrow, and the man of capacious and liberal, views.

The parcel I tendered to your father contained a regular and formal transfer to him of all the property which I had just put upon his table, with the exception of the contents of the black box.

It is not your will, said Fleetwood: I will not touch a farthing of your property.

You shall not. My property is contained in this black box. The rest is a debt I am come to you to pay. Why will you make many words, in a case which common sense decides in a moment?

It is yours. The small germ from which it sprung was the gift of my father.

ther. The rest is the accumulation of your industry, the fruits of twenty years' occupation and labour. I insist upon it, that you take it away.

Fleetwood, if I must speak on such a subject, hear me! Good God, it is the plainest question in the world! I have been your father's steward, and bring back the fruits of my stewardship to his son. I have abstracted from it a considerable sum, which was necessary to my eligible settlement in my own country. I had always determined to settle exactly in the way I am now executing. You have not disturbed my projects a jot. If I had retained the property which is now yours, I never would have spent an atom of it upon myself or any of my relations. I should have been a trustee for others, and a very laborious office I should have had. As it is, the whole is yours. I have calculated the matter with great niceness, and I find that you will this day

day be placed exactly where your father left you. We shall neither of us be the better or the worse for each other, except as I hope we shall be both gainers in the possession of each other's friendship and affections. Did I say, that we shall neither of us be the better or the worse? Alas! how grievous an error did I commit! I am still indebted to your father and you, for my life, my education, my estimation in the world, the years of respectability and peace I have enjoyed, and the power I have at last exerted to recover the property of my ancestors. When I owe you so vast a debt that I can never repay, how can you be so ungenerous as to endeavour to prevent me from reimbursing this insignificant portion of the obligation I owe you?

I was peremptory, and your father was obliged to submit. We had each our place, assigned us by the destiny under

der which we were born; and the arrangement I now made was restoration to us both. I wanted to end my life like my father, a citizen of Uri; it was proper that my friend should live like his ancestors, a great English merchant, and, when he retired from active life, an opulent English country-gentleman. What had I, a republican of the old model, to do with bonds, warrants and securities? To me they were an insupportable incumbrance; to your father they were necessary. You perceive with me, my dear Casimir, that all the obligation was on one side. Your father and grandfather had done every thing for me; I did nothing for them. They had taken me in, an outcast; they had made me one of their family, equal with themselves; they had given me my education, and by consequence every quality that made me respectable in the eyes of my fellow beings; I had lived upon them

them for twenty years in the style of a German sovereign. If the venerable Ambrose Fleetwood had been more actively my friend, I always considered the part your father acted as not a whit less honourable. Human beings are in all cases so fond of their creatures! in the objects of their generosity they behold the mirror of their own virtues, and are satisfied. Your grandfather made me his child, and doted on me as such. But your father, without the smallest pretence to this original merit, without any stimulus in the gratification of his own complacence, entered into the sentiment of my preserver, never uttered a murmur, never felt a compunction, but fully approved of the lavish bounty which stripped him of so considerable a portion of his fortune. It was this feeling of his heart which made us brothers, brothers by a dearer bond than that of nature, by a more sacred tie than that of a com-

mon descent. My soul has always panted for an occasion of showing myself worthy of such a friend, of repaying some small part of the obligation I owe to the name of Fleetwood; but I shall go down to the grave ungratified in this first wish of my heart.

## CHAPTER V.

In such talk I and my friend spent the chief part of our journey to England. We reached Merionethshire, and found a desolated mansion and a tenanted grave. In the one, and over the other, we united our tears. My friend! my father! most generous of men! were the epithets with which a thousand times we saluted the shade of the departed.

And here I beg leave to protest against the doctrine too commonly promulgated in the world, that we ought to call off our thoughts, as speedily as possible, from the recollection of our deceased friends, and not waste our spirits in lamentation for irremediable losses. The persons from whom I have oftenest heard this lesson, have been of the class of the har-

hard-hearted, who have sought in such "counsels of prudence" an apology for their own unfeeling serenity. He was a wiser man than they, who said, "It is good to dwell in the house of mourning; for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." Certainly I found a salutary and purifying effect, in talking to the spirit of my father when I was alone, and in discoursing of his good deeds and his virtues when I came into society. I cannot accuse these habits of having generated in me an inclination to indolence and inactivity; or, if they introduced a short interval of that sort, it was a heaven-born inactivity, by which my whole character was improved. Woe to the man, who is always busy, ——hurried in a turmoil of engagements from occupation to occupation, and with no seasons interposed, of recollection, contemplation and repose! Such a man must inevitably be gross and vulgar and

hard and indelicate, the sort of man with whom no generous spirit would desire to hold intercourse.

After having spent about two months with me in Merionethshire, M. Ruffigny consented to accompany me in an excursion, rendered necessary by particular business, to London. I was not at first exactly aware of the motive of my venerable monitor to this new compliance. In the sequel it became sufficiently evident.

This was the first considerable visit I ever paid to the metropolis of England. Beside the change of scene, I had a new character to sustain. I had travelled in France a young heir, and in a certain sense under a state of pupillage. In London I was obliged to regard myself as the head of a family, and in point of fortune one of the most eminent country-gentlemen, of that part of the island where my estates lay. This was calcu-

calculated in its first impression to inspire me with a certain seriousness. But, beside this, I felt, by the death of my father, and the society of my father's friend, purified from the dissipations which had too long engrossed me. I swore, in the views which I meditated for my future life, that I would never again yield to the degrading follies which had already cost me so bitter a pang.

For some time I kept this resolution. By the persuasions of Ruffigny I frequented in a moderate degree the society of my equals; but the very mourning I wore for my deceased parent, served as a memento, keeping alive in my heart the recollection of my duties.

In one unfortunate moment I felt my good resolutions thawing before the flame of beauty. A friend who had made one with me in a rather numerous party at dinner, persuaded me, when the com-

company broke up, to accompany him to a *petit souper* at the lodgings of his mistress. Wine is a most eloquent advocate; the Burgundy and Champaigne had been pushed about somewhat briskly at our dinner; and I suffered myself to be persuaded in the gaiety of the moment. I said, No ill consequence can result from this deviation; I am fortified by a thousand arguments against a relapse into my former errors; why should I deny myself the sight of beauty?

My inviter, sir George Bradshaw by name, had boasted of the charms of his mistress; but there happened to be present, as the friend of the lady of the house, a female whose pretensions, at least in my eyes, outshone those which I had heard so vaunted, in an unspeakable degree. I will not allow myself to dwell upon her features or her figure: suffice it to say, that her motions were lighter and more graceful than those of a fawn,

a fawn, that the playfulness of her manner and the sports of her fancy were inexhaustible, that her voice was more rich and harmonious than the lute of Apollo, and that she sung twenty frolicsome and humorous songs in the course of the evening with an inexpressible charm. The lady was called mrs. Comorin; she had lately cohabited with lord Mandeville; but she had quarrelled with her admirer, and her heart and her person were now vacant.

By what infatuation was it, that I instantly felt myself attracted toward her? Surely, when nature kneaded my frame, she cast in a double portion of her most combustible materials! Deep scars were left in my heart by my Parisian amours; and I believed it impossible that any of the sex could again possess herself of my inmost affections. I had argued myself into a contempt of their character, an opinion that to be a woman,

man, was the same thing as to be heartless, artificial and perfidious. But what a delightful plaything, what an inexhaustible amusement, should I find in the bewitching mrs. Comorin!——This was the most dangerous stage of my character. The heart cannot be used for ever; after a certain number of experiments it becomes obdurate and insensible; but, if I fell, as I now seemed on the point to do, into the mire of sensuality, I should become a gross and impudent libertine for the term of my life, and remain a hoary and despicable lecher to the brink of the grave.

I saw this alluring woman again and again; and every time I saw her I was more pleased than before. She was made up of pride of heart, ease of manners, and an inexhaustible flow of spirits; of sentiment and real attachment she was wholly incapable. I saw her for such as she was; but, such as she was,

she won my partiality; and perhaps, owing to the dear-bought experience which I could not yet recollect without agony, I liked her the better, for her want of those qualities, which had so fatally stung my tranquillity.

I had strange qualms in my bosom, when the recollection of my inconsistency recurred to my thoughts. I, that had felt with such bitter remorse my debaucheries at Paris, and the shameful way in which I had wasted my time when my father lay on his death-bed, to be so soon caught in the same toils!——Yet what, alas, is the firmness of twenty-one? Five years of licentiousness had laid the foundation in me, deep and broad, for a dissolute character. In my adventures in Paris I had lost all that ingenuous and decent shame, which so often and so happily stops a young man on the brink of the precipice. Even the original sensitiveness and delicacy

of my character, rendered me but the more tremblingly audacious in certain situations.

I was beyond all things alarmed that the caprice which had thus seized me, should remain unknown to M. Ruffigny. His thoughts on the other hand were continually alive to watch. I had been in the habit, while I had nothing to conceal, of mentioning to this aged friend, the persons I saw and the places I visited, whenever we were separated from each other. A practice of this sort once begun, cannot, without awkwardness and exciting suspicion, be broken off; circumstanced therefore as I now was, I named to my monitor sir George Bradshaw and the other young men of fashion with whom I associated, but observed an inviolable silence as to the female members of our parties. Ruffigny's suspicions were probably excited. Sir George Bradshaw was by no means

the

the ally he would have chosen for me. Once or twice he expostulated with me upon the new intimacies I seemed to be contracting. I assured him that they were matters of convenience or accident merely, and that I felt no such partiality to the baronet, as a mere change of place would not immediately break off.

One evening that I had left M. Ruffigny to his solitary avocations, the fancy took him to beguile a few hours at the opera. As he had no acquaintance among the audience, he sat in the pit. I was with sir George Bradshaw, mrs. Comorin and her friend, in the baronet's box. Ruffigny perceived me, long before I had an idea that I was become a spectacle to him. The publicity of the situation, restrained my familiarities with this new mistress of my affections, within certain bounds; but Ruffigny saw enough, to leave no doubt in his mind as to the true

true explanation of the scene. My fair friend was of too vivacious a temperament, not to play a hundred whimsical tricks in the course of an hour; I caught the tone from her, and made myself no less ridiculous. In the heyday of youthful blood I was capable of little restraint; and my infant passion inspired me with unwonted eagerness and activity. In one of my idlest and most forward sallies I caught the eye of Ruffigny; my face instantly became as red as scarlet.

The next morning at breakfast we met. Ruffigny charged me seriously with what he had discovered, with the disgrace I was bringing on my father's name, and the weakness and frailty of the resolutions I had solemnly made. The infatuation under which I laboured, stung me to a defence of the situation in which I had been found. I more than half suspected that I was wrong; and

and this rendered me tenfold the more peremptory and earnest in my vindication.

Could I, asked Ruffigny, apologise for this recent misconduct, when I had expressed such bitter compunction for the errors I had fallen into at Paris?

Very easily, and very consistently, I replied. Those errors I should ever regret, and regarded now with as much abhorrence as ever. With whom were they committed? With women having husbands and children, and occupying a respectable situation in society. I could conceive nothing, which would be pronounced more atrocious by an uncorrupted mind. If the crimes, thus committed under a decent veil, and which, like the thefts of the Spartan youth, were commended, as long as they were carried on with a dextrous obscurity, came to be detected, what misery and confusion would they produce in families?

families? But, detected or not detected, they poisoned every thing that was valuable in social ties. They depended for their perpetration upon one eternal scene of hypocrisy and dissimulation. The guilty female, instead of being that exemplary character which her situation called upon her to fill, was devoted to licentious thoughts, and must in her cooler moments be the object of her own contempt. The children she brought into the world she could not love, and the husband she received with personated caresses was the individual in the world she was conscious of most deeply injuring. Where such a state of society prevailed, every lover must regard his mistress with moral disapprobation, and every husband suspect that by the partner of his bosom his confidence was betrayed.

But in the acquaintance I contracted with this English lady, I injured no one.

No

No delusion was practised by any of the parties. She would not be made worse by any thing into which she was induced by me; and neither I nor any one else understood her but for what she was. Unfortunately my adventures in Paris had led me to form such an idea of the sex, that I could never be reconciled to the thoughts of marriage: must I on that account remain as solitary and continent as a priest?

The conversation between me and Ruffigny gradually became warmer; but I was like Telemachus in the island of Calypso, so inflamed by the wiles of the God of Love, so enamoured with the graces and witchcraft of my Eucharis, that all remonstrances were vain. In vain were the reasonings of honour and truth; in vain the voice of my venerable instructor, to which I had vowed everlasting attention. I parted from him with peevishness and ill humour.

Is

Is it possible, said I, as I sallied into the street, to conceive any thing so unreasonable as Ruffigny? There are two principal crimes which, in the code of just morality, respect the relations of the sexes, adultery and seduction. I know that puritans and monks have added a third to the class, and have inveighed indiscriminately against all incontinence. I do not decide whether their censure is wholly destitute of foundation. But was ever any one so absurd, as to place simple incontinence, upon a level with incontinence attended by one or the other of these aggravations? And yet this obstinate old Swiss will not be beaten out of it!

This argument no doubt was exceedingly demonstrative and satisfactory; but, as I passed and repassed it in my mind, I did not altogether like it. I hastened to dine with sir George Bradshaw, and to visit mrs. Comorin. I believed

lieved I should derive better lights on the subject from the brilliancy of her eyes, than from Burgersdicius or Condillac.

My sensations of this day were in a high degree painful and perturbed. I confess that at moments mrs. Comorin never appeared to me so beautiful as now. I gazed on her with extacy; but that very extacy was tempestuous, and interrupted with visions of my father and my father's friend. Nothing was clear and perspicuous in my mind. I suspected that my present passion was a vapour only, was lighter than vanity; my thoughts whispered me, that all I had seen most worthy and excellent on earth, was my deceased parent and Ruffigny. My soul was chaos.

A certain sentiment of remorse led me, sooner than usual, to quit the company and hasten home. I tasked my thoughts as I went, Shall I be distant

and

and cold to Ruffigny? Shall I endeavour to soothe him, and appease his anger? or, Shall I sacrifice every thing at once to his invaluable friendship? I enquired of my servant as I entered, Where is M. Ruffigny?

Gone.

Gone? Whither?

Into the country. He has been employed all day in preparations, and set out in a post-chaise about half an hour ago.

Impossible! Gone into the country, and say nothing to me of the matter!

He has left a letter for you.

I was impatient to peruse this letter. Yet, even while I opened it, a thousand contending thoughts were embattled in my mind. I felt that his going was intimately connected with our dissension of that morning. I vehemently accused myself for having so far offended the good old man. I was full of resentment against him

him for having, at this first difference, conceived a mortal offence. It was not till after repeated efforts, that I found myself in a state sufficiently calm to read the letter.

CASIMIR FLEETWOOD,

THE fact is at length ascertained. I have travelled from Switzerland to Britain, and my dear friend, your late father, has died,—in vain.

Is it possible? Shall this be so? Casimir Fleetwood, you are called on to decide!

I cannot descend to altercation. It is not seemly, that tried and hoary integrity should come into the lists, to chop logic with petulant and hot-blooded vice. If events, such as have lately been brought to strike upon your heart, will not waken you, in vain might a stronger impulse be sought in the deductions of Zeno, and the homilies of Epictetus. Remember what I am, and how related

to your family; remember your late father; remember the day of the lake of Uri.

On that day you said, "Would to God it were in my power to recal a few past months! My prospects and my pleasures are finished; my life is tarnished; my peace is destroyed; I shall never again think of myself with approbation, or with patience!" And you are now returned to the course of life which you then censured with so much bitterness. Was it you that said it?

One of the worst symptoms on the present occasion, is the sophistry with which you defend your error. A beginning sinner offends, and accuses himself while he offends; a veteran in wrong has still some flimsy, miserable dissertation, by which he proves that wrong is not wrong.

Another symptom which almost bids me despair, is the recent date of your conversion and good resolutions. The evening

evening before we set out from Merionethshire, we wept together at your father's grave. The monitor whom you consented, at seventy years of age, to withdraw from his native valley, and to bring along through various climes and states, has not yet quitted you. If you relapse, while all these things are green and fresh before you, what shall be predicted of the actions and pursuits in which you will be engaged a few years hence?

Shame, my dear Fleetwood, shame is ever the handmaid of vice. What is the language you have held to me for the last three weeks? What shall I name you? Mean prevaricator! You pretended to inform me who were the persons with whom you associated. You mentioned all the men of your society; you did not hint at a single woman. You said, you felt no such partiality *to sir George Bradshaw*, as a mere change of place would not immediately break off.—Do you think, that there is no vice in the con-

Casimir, my heart bleeds for you. Think what my feelings are; the feelings of Ruffigny, to whom the name of Fleetwood is a name for every thing sacred, who cannot be content that one spot should stain the lustre of its white, who lives only in hopes to discharge a small part of his obligations to your father and grandfather, and whose aged heart will burst, the moment he is convinced the son is fixed to disgrace the virtues of his ancestors!——

You will recollect that I had a business which made it desirable for me to make an excursion into Devonshire, previously to my return to my native country. I have seized this occasion for that purpose. I shall be absent a fortnight, Casimir, I cannot parley with you. I leave you to your reflections. When I return, I shall know, whether Ruffigny is to live or die.

Yours, more than his own,

Before I had half read this letter, I rung the bell, and ordered myself a post-chaise. I felt that I could suffer a thousand deaths sooner than pass this fortnight in separation, or suffer my friend to remain a moment in doubt of my good resolutions, when I had formed them. I travelled all night, and overtook Ruffigny at Basingstoke. I rushed into his arms; I could not utter a word; I sobbed on his bosom. When I could speak, I was endless in my professions of gratitude, and in protestations of a future innocent and honourable life. I spoke of the recent delusion into which I had fallen, with accents of horror, self-detestation and despair. Ruffigny was deeply affected.

This prompt and decisive return to reason and virtue inspires me with the most sanguine hope, said he.

## CHAPTER VI.

M. RUFFIGNY continued with me
ral months; and during the remain
his life, which was about six years,
nerally made a visit once a year t
canton of Uri. The relation whic
isted between his family and min
of the most interesting sort. Ne
any age or country were two p
bound together by ties so noble. I
ed in his face, and saw the featu
the venerable Ambrose Fleetwood,
of my beloved father. What I ren
ed was not the thing we denomina
mily-likeness, the sort of cast of c
tenance by which descents and
grees, whether wise men or fools,
ther knaves or honest, are, like the
viduals of different nations, identifi

over the world. The resemblance I perceived, though less glaring at first sight, extended its root infinitely deeper. It was that their hearts had been cast in the same mould. He must have been a very slight observer of men, who is not aware that two human creatures, equally good, that love each other, and have during long periods associated together, unavoidably contract a similarity of sentiments, of demeanour, and of physiognomonical expression. But, beside this resemblance of Ruffigny to my parents, which some will regard as fantastical, the countenance of the venerable Swiss was a book where I could trace the history of my ancestors. It was like the book of the records of king Ahasuerus in the Bible, in which the good deeds and deserts of the virtuous were written, that they might not perish from the memories of those who were indebted to them, unhonoured and forgotten.

The benefits my father proposed for me from the counsels and intercourse of Ruffigny I extensively obtained. From this period I became an altered man. The ebriety and extravagance of youth were at an end with me. The sobriety, the delicacy, the sentimental fastidiousness of my childish days, revived in my bosom; and I looked back with astonishment at my adolescence, that I could ever have departed so widely from my genuine character.

The means employed for my conversion were indeed amply commensurate to the end proposed. There was something so venerable in the figure and appearance of Ruffigny, and primitive and patriarchal in his manners and modes of thinking, that it was perhaps impossible to converse intimately with him, and yet continue whelmed in the mire of licentiousness. But, beside his general qualifications for the office, he came recom-

mended to me by considerations so sacred, as to render his expostulations, his persuasives, and his alarms to my virtue and honour, irresistible. What an unexampled friendship was that which bound together the names of Fleetwood and Ruffigny! Could I listen, otherwise than as to the admonitions of a God, to the discourses of a man who had generously, in his life-time, and in the full vigour of his age, surrendered to my family a fortune almost princely, and tranquilly retired to the simplicity of his ancestors? In every word he spoke I felt this circumstance inforcing his remarks. The misery of admonition in general, is that it is so difficult for the person whose benefit it professes, to be convinced of the disinterestedness of his monitor. Some suspicion of selfishness, of ostentation, of vanity, of false colours, and the disingenuousness of a pleader, lurks within,

within, and poisons every clause. Could I suspect any thing of that kind, in this living Curius, who had come from his Sabine farm, the voluntary obscurity to which he had withdrawn his age, purposely to fulfil the last injunctions of my father, and to provide for the tranquillity and virtue of the son? While I listened to his voice, my conscience whispered me, It is the voice of him, but for whose absolute self-denial and heroic friendship, my father would have been bankrupt of comforts and fortune, and myself a beggar.

By degrees—let me venture to say—I became assimilated, however imperfectly, to my admirable monitor. I whispered to my swelling heart, "Never, no, never, will I belong to such men as these, and not make it the first object of my solicitude to become like them. Let other men talk of their heroic blood, and

and swear they will not blot a long line of princes from whom they may be descended! Here is my patent of nobility, than which I defy all the monarchs of the earth to show a brighter; not sealed by the ruin of provinces and empires, but by the purest and most godlike contempt of all selfish views that ever was exhibited. In me the race of the Fleetwoods shall survive; I will become heir to the integrity and personal honour of the virtuous Ruffigny."

Why do I write down these elevated vows, which, alas, I have never redeemed! I but the more sincerely subscribe to my own condemnation. My history, as I early remarked, is a register of errors, the final record of my penitence and humiliation.

From this period however, I ceased to practise the vices of a libertine. The faults I have further to confess are of a different nature. My heart was henceforward

forward pure, my moral tastes revived in their genuine clearness, and the errors I committed were no longer those of a profligate. Thus far I became unequivocally a gainer by this great event of my life.

CHAP.

## CHAPTER VII.

My education and travels had left me a confirmed misanthropist. This is easily accounted for. I had seen nothing of the world but its most unfavourable specimens. What can be less amiable, than the broad, rude, unfeeling and insolent debaucheries of a circle of young men, who have just begun to assume the privileges of man, without having yet learned his engagements and his duties? What can be more ignoble and depraved, than the manners of a court and a metropolis, especially of such a court and metropolis as those of the last years of Louis XV? My constitutional temper was saturnine and sensitive. This character of mind had been much heightened in me in my early solitude in Wales.

I came into the world prepared to be a severe and an unsparing judge. For a time I did violence to myself, and mingled in the vices I witnessed. But this had not the effect of making me less, but more, intolerant. When I came to myself, the spots I observed upon the vesture of my innocence, made me feel a still deeper loathing for the foul and miry roads through which I had journeyed. It has often been said that there is no sharper Argus or severer judge, than a superannuated debauchee. I know not how generally this is the case; but it may easily be supposed that there is much truth in the maxim, where the mind was originally virtuous, and was endowed with a taste vivid and thoroughly alive to the difference of beauty and deformity, whether intellectual or moral. I loved and inexpressibly honoured the characters of Ruffigny and my own immediate ancestors; but this

only whetted my disapprobation of the rest of my species. They were so totally unlike every other person with whom I had familiarly associated, that they struck me like luminaries sent into the world to expose the opacity and disgraces of the rest of its inhabitants. Perhaps that is the most incorrigible species of misanthropy, which, as Swift expresses it, loves John and Matthew and Alexander, but hates mankind.

Here then begins the moral of my tale: I "repented," but I was not "made whole." My entire future life was devoted to the expiation of five years of youthful folly and forgetfulness. If I had retained the simplicity and guilelessness of my Merionethshire character, it is impossible but I should have been happy. As it was,

all the voyage of my life
Was bound in shallows and in miseries.

I had

I had contracted a contamination, which could never be extirpated. Innocence is philanthropical and confiding, "believeth all things, and hopeth all things." I looked upon every thing with an eye of jealousy and incredulity. The universe had lost to me that sunshine, which it derives from the reflection of an unspotted mind. All was dark, and dreary, and sable around me. I wandered in pathless wilds, unable to arrive but at regions of barren rock and immensurable sands. Innocence is a sort of magnetism, by which one good heart understands another. It is peaceful when alone; and, when it comes out into the world, it meets with individual after individual whom it confesses for brothers. I had lost this touchstone. In solitude I was disconsolate; and, if I mixed in the haunts of men, I understood them not; in no one did I find a com-

companion; and, in the most populous resorts and crowded assemblies, I was perfectly and consummately alone.

I returned to my solitude in Wales with an arrow in my heart. What did I want? I knew not. Yet I was not happy. I regarded my own life with no complacency or approbation. Oh, Cader Idris! Oh, beloved banks of the Desunny! Glorious men once trod your shades, my father, and my father's friend. How can I compare with these? Their lives were generous, and marked with the most disinterested sacrifices; but what have I done? If my days had been spent in innocence, that were much. I passed but a short period in the tumult of society; but in that period how many blots did I contract! These blots make all my history.

There are but two principal sources of happiness to the man who lives in solitude:

tude: memory, and imagination. The recollections which offered themselves to my memory gave me no pleasure. That period of my life which was most fraught with impressions, and which therefore made the principal stock of my memory, was hateful to me. Imagination in the days of my youth had been the main fountain of my delight. The materials of my imagination had been childish impressions, eked out with the books of children, with pastoral ideas, and fairies, and magic, and processions, and palaces. But, when we have mixed in real scenes, the materials furnished by books shrink into insignificance. The actual affairs into which the passions of man have obtruded themselves, ambition and vanity and shame, and love and jealousy and despair, take so much faster hold of the mind, that even when we would expatiate in worlds of fancy, these affairs

affairs will push forward, and in spite of us make a part of the landscape we delineate.

I know that most men would have been happy in my place, at least much happier than I was. The transactions of my early years have nothing singular in them, except as they were made so by my turn of mind, and the strong and subtle passions which were thus called forth in me. A dissipated and riotous life at the university, and a succession of mistresses at first introduction into the world, compose the history of most young men, born to the inheritance of a considerable fortune, and whose education has been conducted in a style of liberal expence. Such young men are usually found to retire contented after the effervescence of youth is over, and unreluctantly to exchange the drawing-rooms of foreign courts, and the contemplation of foreign manners, for the country-

country-club and the bowling-green. They lay aside their sattin suits, and take up their pipes, and become as complete rustics, as if they had never wandered beyond the smoke of their own chimneys.

Such was not the case in my instance. At no time of my life did I ever delight in such "worshipful society;" and I retained too deep an impression of the scenes of courtly refinement I had witnessed, to be capable of dwindling into a mere justice of the peace. I sought consolation in the exercise of my beneficence; and, though I never entered the halls of the wealthy, I often penetrated into the cottages of the poor: and I found what I expected. But, though I found the consolation I looked for, I did not find it in the degree I looked for. I had recourse to the amusements of literature: I formed projects,—— sometimes of investigating the progress

or

or decay of national genius and taste, and sometimes of following through its minutest ramifications a certain memorable period of history,——projects which led me from author to author in wide succession, and took away the oppressive feelings of passiveness which frequently pursue us, when we resign ourselves to the simple and direct reading of a single work.

But neither beneficence nor study afforded me sufficient occupation. The relieving the wants of our neighbour, is a pursuit which can only employ us at intervals, and can never form the leading and regular business of our lives. Reading has its periods of satiety. I fell sometimes, for want of an object sufficiently to exercise the passions, into long fits of languor and depression, which were inconceivably wearisome. Exercise and the scenes of nature no longer relieved me. The inactivity which came over

over me made it very difficult for me to summon the resolution to go out of doors in search of variety. But, when that difficulty was conquered, variety itself afforded me no pleasure. The landscape was as if it had lost the prismatic illusion, which clothes it to the sense of sight in such beautiful colours. The fields were no longer green, nor the skies were blue; or at least they afforded no more pleasure to my eyes, than they would have done if the grass had been withered, and the heavens shrouded in pestilence and death. The beautiful and the bold forms of valley and mountain, which had frequently delighted me, seemed to my eye loathsome and tame and monotonous. The refreshing breeze which gives new life even to the wearied patient perishing with a fever, played in vain upon my countenance and among the locks of my hair.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER VIII.

TIRED of the country, I repaired to London. To be presented at court, and occasionally to make one in the rout, the ball, or the *festino* of a lady of quality, were rather necessities I submitted to, than pleasures I sought. One advantage which I knew I should find in the metropolis was an opportunity of frequenting the society of men of genius. I heard of a club of authors, several of whose works I had read with pleasure, and I obtained the favour of being admitted an honorary member. The society had assumed to itself a Greek name, as if by way of hint to the ignorant and the illiterate to keep their distance.

I did not however find in this society the

the pleasure I had anticipated. Undoubtedly in the conversations they held I heard many profound remarks, many original conceptions, many pointed repartees, many admirable turns of humour and wit. I impute it to the fastidiousness of my own temper, bred in solitude, and disgusted with the world, that I so soon grew weary of this classic circle. I saw better men than myself; men of elevated rank and refined breeding, as well as of accomplished minds, who derived from the dinners and suppers of this club, and still more from the separate society and acquaintance of its members, an enjoyment upon which they set a high value. As far as my observation of the world extended, it was always the more valuable individuals in the class of men of quality and fortune, it was such as possessed the most generous minds and the most comprehensive views, who delighted most in the intercourse

course of men of literature. They were the fools, the envious and the selfish, who shunned such intimates, because they could not bear to be outdone by persons poorer than themselves, and because they felt the terrifying apprehension of being reduced by them into ciphers. I saw also, contrary to the received opinion, that the men of real genius, and who were genuine ornaments of the republic of letters, were always men of liberal tempers, of a certain nobility and disinterestedness of sentiment, and anxious for the promotion of individual and general advantage, however they might sometimes be involved in petty and degrading altercations and disputes.

On the other hand I must do myself the justice to say, that I discovered many real blemishes and errors in these conversations. The literary men whose acquaintance I could boast, were frequently

as

as jealous of their fame and superiority, as the opulent men, their neighbours, were of the preservation and improvement of their estates. This indeed is but natural: every man, who is in any way distinguished from the herd of his species, will of course set no small value upon that thing, whatever it is, to which he is indebted for his distinction. No one who has tasted of honour, would willingly be thrust out among the ignoble vulgar. The only thing which can defend a man against this pitiful jealousy and diseased vigilance, is a generous confidence in his own worth, teaching him that it will find its place without any dishonest and clandestine exertion on his part. The individual who is continually blowing the fire of his own brilliancy, who asserts and denies, is direct or artificial, serious or jocose, not attending to the inspirations of truth and simplicity of heart, but as he thinks

thinks may best contribute to advance his reputation, if he can at all be acknowledged for a pleasant companion and associate, is so at least with a very powerful draw-back. Such men form to themselves an art of conversation by which they may best maintain the rank in intellect they have acquired. They think little of the eliciting truth, or a conformity to the just laws of equal society, but have trained themselves to a trick, either by an artful interruption, a brutal retort, a pompous, full sounding and well pronounced censure, or an ingeniously supported exhibition of sarcastic mockery, to crush in the outset the very appearance of rivalship, and to turn the admiration of bystanders entirely upon themselves.

This is altogether a very pitiful policy. True literary reputation does not depend upon a man's maintaining a shining figure, in the conversations in which

which he mixes. If an individual has no nobler ambition than to be the chairman of his own club, why does he commit his thoughts to paper, or send them through the medium of the press into the world? The moment he has done this, he ought to consider himself as having pronounced his disdain of the fugitive character of a conversation-wit or a conversation-bully. I am inclined to believe that no one ever uniformly maintained, in various companies, the first place in subtlety and wit, who had not cultivated this character with dishonest art, and admitted many unmanly and disingenuous subterfuges into the plan by which he pursued it. If so, the shining man of a company is to be put down in the lowest class of persons of intellect. If men entitled to a higher place have too often submitted to this, it is that they have inflicted on themselves a voluntary degradation.—— One exception

tion only can I devise to this ingenuousness, which is, where a man has the absolute *cacoethes loquendi**, and where his thoughts are so brilliant and elevated, that all other men will be eager to listen to them.

The man of genius who has delivered the fruit of his meditations and invention to the public, has nothing naturally to do with this inglorious struggle. He converses that he may inform and be informed. He wishes to study the humours, the manners, and the opinions of mankind. He is not unwilling to take his share in conversation, because he has nothing to conceal, and because he would contribute, as far as with modesty and propriety he can, to the amusement and instruction of others. But his favourite place is that of a spectator. He is more eager to add to his own stock of

* Disease of speaking.

observation and knowledge, than to that of his neighbours. This is natural and just: since he knows better his own wants, than he can know the wants of any other man; and since he is more sure of the uses that will be made, of the acquisitions he shall himself obtain.

Among the literary men I saw in this club, or with whom I in some way became acquainted in consequence of being a member of it, I found one or two exceptions such as I have last described; but the rest were stimulated by the love of praise in society, as much as they had been in their writings; and the traps they laid for applause were no less gross and palpable, than those employed by a favourite actor, or the author of a modern comedy.

Even such members of the club as did not sacrifice all truth and justice at the shrine of a sordid vanity, had the habit, as I heard it once expressed by a captious

tious visitor at his return from one of their meetings, of speaking as if they talked out of a book. I admit that this is a fastidious objection. He who spends his life among books, must be expected to contract something of the manner of his constant companions. He who would disentangle a knotty point, or elucidate a grave question of taste, morals or politics, must discourse to some degree in the way of dissertation, or he would discourse in vain; and, if, like a dissertation for popular readers, he takes care to relieve his style with something pointed and epigrammatic, paints his thoughts as he goes on, to the imagination of his hearers, interrupts himself gracefully, and is on his guard not to say a word too much, he may be allowed to have played his part commendably. If by talking as out of a book, is meant no more, than that a man speaks correctly, with well chosen words, in a perspicu-

ous style, and with phrases neatly turned, the objection is eminently unreasonable. Such is the true and sound view of the subject; but it was in vain to argue the point; so I was made, and so I found myself affected.

I was the spoiled child of the great parent, Nature. I delighted only in the bold and the free, in what was at one and the same time beautiful and lawless. What aspired to please me must be as wild as the artless warblings of the choristers of the woods. Its graces must be unexpected, and were endeared so much the more to me as they showed themselves in the midst of irregularity. What spoke to my heart must be a full, mellow and protracted note, or a bewitching vibration of sound, which seemed to come on purpose to reward me for listening for a time, to what gave no express promise of so pure a delight.

But, had it been otherwise, an atten-

dance once a week, during the season, at a club of authors, and the occasional society of its members in the intervals, would have afforded but slender materials for happiness. It might have answered to the confections which amuse the palate at the end of a feast, but it could never appease the appetite of him, who feels an uneasy and aching void within, and is in hot chase for the boon of content.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER IX.

Among the members of our club who were not themselves authors, there were a few who were among the most distinguished ornaments of the English senate. The intercourse of these men was particularly delightful to me. Their manners were more urbane, attentive, flattering and uniform, than those of the professional authors. They were gentlemen by birth and by education; and, as they had not the same goad urging them along in the pursuit of praise as those who embraced literature as a profession, their passions, at least as seen within these walls, were less restless, their views more enlarged, and their souls possessed of more calm and repose.—— In this comparison, be it remembered, I speak

speak only of the majority of the authors who were members of this club. Among them I knew some illustrious exceptions; and I should think myself highly censurable in deciding from those I saw, upon the merits of others whom I never knew.

The pleasure however I felt in the intercourse of such of our members as were senators, and the admiration with which I was impressed of their manners and temper, inspired me with the desire of becoming myself a representative in the English parliament. It will readily be perceived, how ill my temper was suited to the office of courting suffrages and soliciting votes. In this one instance I conquered my temper. I promised myself that it should be but for once. I blamed myself for being so unbending to the manners of the world. I saw that the task I was undertaking, would afford me a copious opportunity of studying the humours

humours and predilections of the middling and lower classes of the community: why should I quit the stage of human life without having obtained such an opportunity? I made myself popular, and I resolved to do so. I gave entertainments, and I delivered speeches. I laughed at the rude jokes of handicraftsmen, and I cracked my jokes in return. I smoked my pipe, and toasted Church and King, and the wooden walls of old England. I saw that, in complying with the plain, coarse manners of my constituents, I ran no such risk, as I had done in my former compliances with the manners of the Oxonians and the Parisians; and, instead of despising myself for what I did, I esteemed myself the more, in proportion as I found that I possessed one faculty which I had not before suspected, and as I was able thus stoically to adapt myself to a certain object, and pursue it to the end. I was elected by a con-

considerable majority of votes, and those who had supported me with their suffrages, or who had vociferated and huzzaed in my behalf, were satisfied that they had gained a more important cause, than could have been secured by the deliverance of an oppressed country, or the emancipation of one quarter of the world.

I entered with awe the walls of the British parliament. I recollected the illustrious men of past ages who had figured upon that scene. I recollected the glorious struggles of our ancestors which had there been made, and by means of which greater privileges and liberties had been secured to the people of England, than any of the neighbouring countries could boast. I looked round with complacence upon the accomplished characters who now filled some of the most conspicuous seats on those benches. I eagerly courted the acquaintance of

these leaders. I was desirous to understand their views, and enter into their projects.

There is always something more interesting, to a young and uncorrupted mind, in the cause of opposition, than in the cause of administration. The topics on which they have to expatiate, are of a more animated and liberal cast: rhetoric ever finds a more congenial and less thorny field, in the office of attack, than in that of defence. Liberty is the theme of their declamation; and their bosoms beat with the thought, that they are pleading the cause of the great mass of their countrymen, who are denied the advantage of being able to plead for themselves. Beside which, modern governments always must, or at least always do, have recourse to various modes of proceeding, not exactly in accord with pure notions of integrity; a statesman in place cannot, but in a very limited sense

sense of the word, be an honest man. I therefore enlisted myself in the ranks of opposition.

But, in proportion as I became more familiarly acquainted with the maxims and views of opposition, I felt my satisfaction in them diminished. I saw that their aim was to thrust the ministers in possession out of office, that they might take their places. I became aware that they objected to many things, not because they were bad, but because their defects, real or apparent, afforded plausible topics of declamation. I perceived that the spirit of censuring the measures of government grew too much into a habit, and was directed too much by the intention of bringing the immediate conductors of public affairs into discredit and contempt. I acquitted the most considerable of the leaders from the consciousness of pursuing so pitiful a plan; men of generous minds will

will always dwell upon that view of the business in which they are engaged, which is most congenial to their natural tempers. But, beside every other disadvantage attending them in this situation, persons of merit, engaged in a party, must accommodate themselves to the views of the dullest and meanest of their adherents, to their impatience, their perverseness, and their acrimony; they must employ a thousand arts to soothe their prejudices, and keep them in temper; and as, in every party that ever existed, the fools greatly outnumber the men of understanding, so in matters of party it will infallibly happen, that the honourable and the sage must, on a thousand occasions, be made the tools and dupes of the vilest of the herd. A parliamentary leader scarcely appeared to me the same man in a political consultation, that he had done in a literary club. In his club he was free, ingenuous and gay;

gay; in his political character he was vigilant and uneasy, calculating with restless anxiety upon appearances and results, and still burning with ever new disappointments.

I saw that the public character of England, as it exists in the best pages of our history, was gone. I perceived that we were grown a commercial and arithmetical nation; and that, as we extended the superficies of our empire, we lost its moral sinews and its strength. The added numbers which have been engrafted upon both houses of parliament have destroyed the health and independence of its legislature; the wealth of either India has been poured upon us, to smother that free spirit which can never be preserved but in a moderate fortune; contractors, directors and upstarts, men fattened on the vitals of their fellow-citizens, have taken the place which was once filled by the Wentworths, the Seldens,

dens, and the Hydes. By the mere project, the most detestable and fatal that ever was devised, of England borrowing of the individuals who constitute England, and accumulating what is called a national debt, she has mortgaged her sons to an interminable slavery.

I did not however immediately see things in this point of view. I regarded my entrance into the station of an English senator, as a memorable epoch in my life. I said, I have been too long a mere spectator of the scene of existence; it is owing to this, that I have felt such a constant corroding and dissatisfaction; I will now take an active part. In the measures which are adopted I will have a voice; I will contribute by my advice to their improvement or their overthrow; I will study the principles of legislation; I will detect bad laws, and procure their abrogation; I will bring forward such regulations as the present state

state of manners and policy demands. I will from time to time urge and unfold in a greater or a smaller circle, as occasion may offer, such maxims, as may insensibly tend to the correction and elevation of the character of my country.

I know not whether it was owing to any radical vice in my disposition, but I did not long persist in these gallant resolutions. The difficulties were much greater, than at a distance I had imagined. The contrast which gradually obtruded upon me, between England as I found her in the volumes of her history, and England as she now was, and had insensibly become for more than a hundred years, damped the ardour of my enthusiasm.

Once or twice indeed I felt that animation which raised my soul to such a pitch, that I was conscious I had nothing left,

left, for the moment, to desire. Some measures in which I had a part, were of immediate importance to the welfare of thousands. Some struggles in which I joined were arduous; some victories, in which I was one among the conquerors carried transport to my heart. I witnessed situations, like that which Burke describes upon the repeal of the American Stamp Act, "When at length, after the suitors most interested respecting the issue, had waited with a trembling and anxious expectation, almost to a winter's return of light, the doors of the house were thrown open, and shewed them the figure of their deliverer in the moment of his well-earned triumph; when they jumped upon him like children on a long absent father, and clung about him as captives about their redeemer." But these occasions were of rare occurrence, we soon fell back into the shop-keeping an

and traffic-trained character I deplored; and even to these triumphs themselves, so beautiful to the eye, it was often found that treachery, calculation and cabal had contributed their polluted aid.

CHAP.

## CHAPTER X.

DISPLEASED with the phenomena which I observed in the seat of empire, and satiated with the beauties of my paternal estate, I resolved once more to pass over to the continent, and to seek in the spectacle of different countries, and the investigation of dissimilar manners, relief from the *ennui* which devoured me.

This expedient seemed at first to answer my purpose. Novelty and change have a sovereign power over the human mind.

But the efficacy of this remedy did not last long. Wherever I went, I carried a secret uneasiness along with me. When I left Paris for Vienna, or Vienna for Madrid, I journeyed a solitary individual

vidual along the tedious road; and, when I entered my inn, the same solitude and uncomfortable sensation entered along with me.

I turned aside to examine remarkable objects the fame of which had reached me; I visited some celebrated convent of monks; I took the freedom to introduce myself to some elaborate collector of curiosities, to some statesman or general retired from the busy scene, to some philosopher or poet whose lucubrations had delighted the world. I was generally fortunate enough to make my visit agreeable to the host I selected; I flattered his tastes; I expressed, in the honest language of truth and feeling, the sense I entertained of his character and merits. This sort of avocation afforded me a temporary pleasure; but it often left me in a state of more painful sensation than it found me, and impressed upon me the melancholy conviction of

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the unsubstantial nature of all human enjoyments.

Sometimes I joined company with a fellow-traveller, whom chance directed to the same point, or whom I was able, by some allurement of pleasure or advantage, to prevail upon to pursue my route. In some cases I was disappointed in my companion, found him totally different from what on a slight observation I had conceived him to be, and either separated from him before half our journey was completed, or cursed a hundred times the obligation I had contracted, which, perhaps for twenty days successively, rendered me the slave of a frigid civility. At other times, it may be, the conversation of my fellow-traveller afforded me an unfeigned delight; and then I bitterly regretted the fugitive nature of our intercourse. The sensation I felt was such as has been experienced by passengers in a stage-coach, who have

have just had time to contract a liking for each other, who have whispered to themselves, how agreeable, how animated, how well-informed or how facetious is this stranger, who have met in a domestic way at breakfast, at dinner and at supper, who have wished each other Good-night at the close of the day, and met with salutations in the morning, when suddenly the vehicle whirls them into some vast city, the step of the carriage is let down, one passes one way and another another, one calls for a chaise to convey him up the country, and another hastens with his baggage to the port, being engaged in some distant voyage.

Frequently I sojourned for two, three or four months in some polite or learned residence; and, when I had just had time to familiarise myself with its most valuable inhabitants, was impelled to call to mind, that this was not my home, and that

that it was time to withdraw. W
should I stay? The language, the m
ners and the scene were not native
me; and it was nothing but the nec
sity of departing that made me regr
place, which, if I had been compe
to take up my abode in it, would spe
ily have lost its illusion.

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## CHAPTER XI.

I saw that I was alone, and I desired to have a friend. Friends in the ordinary sense of the word, and that by no means a contemptible sense, I had many: friends who found pleasure in my conversation, who were convinced of the integrity of my principles of conduct, and who would have trusted me in the most important concerns. But what sort of a friend is it, whose kindness shall produce a conviction in my mind, that I do not stand alone in the world? This must be a friend, who is to me as another self, who joys in all my joys, and grieves in all my sorrows, not with a joy or grief that looks like compliment, not with a sympathy that changes into smiles when I am no longer present, though my head con-

tinues bent to the earth with anguisl
I do not condemn the man, upon w
wound through my vitals acts b
scratch; I know that his feelings
tural; I admit him for just, bone
humane, a valuable member of s
But he is not the brother of my he
will not suffer myself to be beguile
to fall into so wretched an error,
mistake the friendship of good-h
or even of esteem, for the frie
which can best console a man i
mity and wretchedness, whether o
or external circumstances. I walk
these men as in an agreeable prome
I speak to one and another, a
cheered with the sight of their
countenances; but they are noth
me; I know that, when death re

it, has been truly said to be a sentiment that can grasp but one individual in its embrace. The person who entertains this sentiment must see in his friend a creature of a species by himself, must respect and be attached to him above all the world, and be deeply convinced that the loss of him would be a calamity, which nothing earthly could repair. By long habit he must have made his friend a part of himself, must be incapable of any pleasure in public, in reading, in travelling, of which he does not make his friend, at least in idea, a partaker, or of passing a day or an hour, in the conceptions of which the thought of his friend does not mingle itself.

How many disappointments did I sustain in the search after a friend! How often this treasure appeared as it were within my grasp, and then glided away from my eager embrace! The desire to possess it, was one of the earliest passions

No, if he can close my eyes, and tl return with a free and unembarras mind to his ordinary business and av tions, this is not love.

I know not how other men are con tuted; but something of this sort see ed essential to my happiness. It is wonderful perhaps, that I, who had b so circumstanced from my infancy, as accustom me to apprehend every disc to my feelings and tastes as mortal to serenity of my mind, should have had impatient a thirst for friendship. T principle of the sentiment may be plained mechanically, and is perhaps, a considerable degree, mechanical in operation. The circumstances, whet allied to pleasure or pain, in which I placed, strike upon my mind, and p duce a given sensation. I do not w to stand alone, but to consider mysel part only of a whole. If that which p duces sensation in me, produces sen

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tion no where else, I am substantially alone. If the lash inflicted on me, will, being inflicted on another, be attended with a similar effect, I then know that there is a being of the same species or genus with myself. Still we are, each of us, substantive and independent. But, if there is a being who feels the blow under which I flinch, in whom my sensations are by a kind of necessity echoed and repeated, that being is a part of myself. Every reasoning and sensitive creature seems intuitively to require, to his perfectly just and proper state, this sort of sympathy. It is inconceivable how great an alleviation is in this way afforded, how it mitigates the agony of every kind of distress. It is inconceivable in how deep and insurmountable a solitude that creature is involved, who looks every where around for sympathy, but looks in vain. Society, an active and a crowded scene, is the furthest in the world from relieving

relieving the sensation of this solitude. The more moving and variegated is the assembly in which I am present, the more full is my conviction that I am alone. I should find as much consolation and rest among what the satirist calls, the vitrified inhabitants of the planet Mercury, as here.

The operation, as I have said, is in one view of it mechanical; in another it is purely intellectual and moral. To the happiness of every human creature, at least in a civilised state, it is perhaps necessary that he should esteem himself, that he should regard himself as an object of complacency and honour. But in this, as well as every other species of creed, it should seem almost impossible for any one to be a firm believer, if there are no other persons in the world of the same sect as himself. However worthy and valuable he may endeavour to consider himself, his persuasion will be attended

tended with little confidence and solidity, if it does not find support in the judgments of other men. The martyr, or the champion of popular pretensions, cheerfully encounters the terrors of a public execution, provided the theatre on which he is to die is filled with his approvers. And, in this respect, the strength of attachment and approbation in a few, or in one, will sometimes compensate the less conspicuous complacence of thousands. I remember to have heard a very vain man say, "I have a hundred friends, any one of whom would willingly die, if it were required for my preservation or welfare:" no wonder that such a man should be continually buoyed up with high spirits, and enjoy the most enviable sensations. Alas, what this man was able to persuade himself he possessed in so wild an exuberance, I sought for through life, and found in no single instance!——

Thus

Thus I spent more than twenty years of my life, continually in search of contentment, which as invariably eluded my pursuit. My disposition was always saturnine. I wanted something, I knew not what. I sought it in solitude and in crowds, in travel and at home, in ambition and in independence. My ideas moved slow; I was prone to *ennui*. I wandered among mountains and rivers, through verdant plains, and over immense precipices; but nature had no beauties. I plunged into the society of the rich, the gay, the witty and the eloquent; but I sighed; disquisition did not rouse me to animation; laughter was death to my flagging spirits.

This disease, which afflicted me at first but in a moderate degree, grew upon me perpetually from year to year. As I advanced in life, my prospects became less gilded with the sunshine of hope; and, as the illusion of the scenes

of

of which I was successively a spectator wore out, I felt with deeper dejection that I was alone in the world.

It will readily be supposed, that in these twenty years of my life I met with many adventures; and that, if I were so inclined, I might, instead of confining myself as I have done to generals, have related a variety of minute circumstances, sometimes calculated to amuse the fancy, and sometimes to agitate the sympathetic and generous feelings, of every reader. I might have described many pleasing and many pathetic incidents in Merionethshire: I might have enlarged upon my club of authors, and thus, in place of making my volumes a moral tale, have converted them into a vehicle for personal satire: I might have expanded the story of my political life, and presented the reader with many anecdotes of celebrated characters, that the world has

little dreamed of: I might have described the casualties of my travels, and the heart-breaking delusions and disappointments of a pretended friendship. It is by no means for want of materials, that I have touched with so light a hand upon this large portion of my life. But I willingly sacrifice these topics. I hasten to the events, which have pressed with so terrible a weight on my heart, and have formed my principal motive to become my own historian.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XII.

I was now near forty-five years of age. Travelling on some factitious occasion near the lakes of Westmorland and Cumberland, and listening, as my custom was, after whatever was extraordinary and interesting (I listened, as the reader has by this time perceived, with vain hope; what was called extraordinary had scarcely the power to excite my attention; what interested others moved not me),——I was told of a gentleman, by name Macneil, that had resided much in foreign countries, and was supposed particularly to have possessed the confidence of the celebrated Jean Jacques Rousseau, who had been some years an inhabitant of the banks of the Windermere. He had a family of daughters, to the form-

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ing whose manners and mind he and his wife had devoted themselves; so that this man who had travelled so much, and whose understanding was so highly cultivated and refined, seemed to have no further business remaining in life, except to provide the children, the offspring of his marriage, with the motives and means of a virtuous and happy existence.

The history of his wife was somewhat uncommon. She had been born on English ground, but he met with her in the Ecclesiastical Territory in Italy. She had eloped to her present consort, not from her parents, but from a man calling himself her husband. This man, an Italian by birth, had been her instructor in music; he was old, deformed, avaricious and profligate. The father of the lady had considered his exterior as a sufficient security, against any injury to which his daughter might be exposed, and,

and, pleased with his visitor's conversation and professional talents, had without scruple invited him to spend month after month under his roof. This repulsive baboon however, soon conceived the plan of robbing his benefactor of his only child; and he succeeded in the attempt. He talked the language of love to a blooming and inexperienced girl, to whom that language had never before been addressed; his voice was harmony, and his manners specious, gentle and insinuating. He won her regard, and, before she had completed her sixteenth year, prevailed on her to desert her paternal roof.

No sooner had he conveyed her to his native country, than he threw off the mask toward her. Her fortune was entirely dependent on her father, except a small portion, which was disputed with the worthy bridegroom in the English courts, and which he soon found

found reason to believe he should never obtain. He made her a prisoner in a dismantled and unwholsome castle which he had inherited from his father, and set over her his sister, as ugly as himself, but who, having obtained no advantages either from education or example, was in a singular degree vulgar, insolent and brutal.

In this situation she lived when, about twelve months after the period in which she left her father's house, mr. Macneil on his travels heard something of her story, and, like a true knight-errant, was prompted to besiege her castle. He had seen her twice under her father's roof; he had lamented, like every other friend of the family, the vile artifices by which she had been trepanned; and, being now informed that she was shut up as a prisoner, and kept from the sight of every human being, except her betrayer, and the hag, his sister, he determined to offer

offer her deliverance. By means of a bribe to one of the servants, he contrived to have a letter conveyed to her hands. The young lady had had leisure to repent of her rashness, and to recollect with infinite remorse the endearments of her natal roof. To receive a line from her countryman, a gentleman whom she remembered to have seen at her father's table, afforded her indescribable pleasure. She knew that the character of mr. Macneil had always been spoken of as the model of integrity and honour. In her perilous situation which she regarded with infinite loathing, she judged that some risk was indispensible. She wrote an answer, enquiring respecting her father; mother she had none in existence. Being informed that he still lived, but was inconsolable for her loss, she became not less earnest than her correspondent, that he should provide the means of her escape.

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She trembled to think whether her father would receive her; sometimes she represented him to herself as a stern judge, refusing her intreaties, at others as the victim of offended love, reproaching her with eyes of death and despair: she desired however to cast herself at his feet, though that moment were to be her last.

Mr. Macneil concerted every thing with the utmost delicacy and honour. He provided an Italian, a woman of character and of some rank, to be the companion of his *protégée* in her journey; he himself observed the strictest ceremony toward them, and attended them no more than was necessary for safety and indispensible accommodation; and he had the satisfaction to deliver this interesting female into the hands of her aged parent.

The reconciliation was easily made, and was scarcely more affecting to the parties

parties themselves, than to the person who had been the happy means of their restoration to each other. Mr. Macneil became the declared lover of the lady he had rescued from slavery. Her marriage with her Italian seducer was speedily dissolved; and, fortunately, no child had been the issue of this ill-omened connection. Still however there was a difficulty. The beautiful penitent dwelt, with all the bitterness of remorse, upon her youthful offence, and a thousand times protested that, as she had rendered herself unworthy, she would never consent to become the wife of an honourable man. Beside which, she continually recollected with agony the cruel manner in which she had fled from an indulgent father, and almost broken his heart, and vowed that, so long as he lived, she would never again quit the paternal roof. These objections, the impassioned dictates of a well-constituted

constituted mind, dwelling with exquisiteness upon an offence so early committed, and so exemplarily atoned, were at length got over; and, after eighteen months of struggle and sorrow, she gave her hand in second and happy marriage to the man of her father's choice, as well as of her own.

I know not whether this story will be found so striking in the repetition, as it was to me when I first heard it. But I felt an uncommon desire to visit the family which I heard thus described. My desire was increased by a conversation respecting the character of mrs. Macneil, between two ladies, within the walls of one of the most elegant mansions on the lakes, at which I happened to be present. One of them was her opponent, and the other her admirer. The latter spoke, in terms of the highest applause, of the qualifications and accomplishments of the young ladies, her daughters.

This

This drew from the gentlewoman of severer temper a pathetic lamentation over their unfortuate situation. No woman, she said, who respected her own character, could afford them countenance; no man who was not dead to all the decencies of human life, could offer them his hand in marriage. They were devoted to misery and dishonour by the very circumstance of their birth; and she held the father no less culpable in marrying a woman under mrs. Macneil's unfortunate predicament, and making her the mother of his children, than if he had married a person, on whom was entailed the most loathsome hereditary disease. What could be thought, as a matron, of a girl who at sixteen had run away with an Italian fidler? How many clandestine provocatives to depravity must she have listened to from him, before she could have been prevailed upon to take so outrageous a step? When he had

had conveyed her into Italy, he i
duced her to his own friends, an
doubt her principal associates *for t*
*three years* had been sharpers and pr
tutes. The consequence was, that
impudently eloped with a stranger fr
the husband of her choice, as she h
before eloped from her misguided fath
Poor, wretched miss Macneils, seale
to perdition! What lessons could the
receive from such a mother, but lesson
of debauchery! So impure a mind could
not instil into them sentiments of virtue,
if she would, and would not, if she
could. She remembered, the gentlewo-
man added, to have seen the young la-
dies at Kendal theatre; they were fine
girls; the more was the pity!

The partisan of mrs. Macneil put no
less warmth into her reply, than her ad-
versary had given to her invective. She
knew little of the lady herself, in conse-
quence of the rules of society by which
she

she was excluded from the visiting circles of the neighbourhood. Once however she had chanced to be her fellow-traveller in a public vehicle from York to London; and she had heard much more of her, than she had then had an opportunity to observe. From every thing she had seen, and every thing she could collect, she was persuaded it was impossible for any thing in the form of a woman, to exceed the present correctness of mrs. Macneil's conversation and conduct. Why should it be supposed that an error committed before the age of sixteen, could never be atoned? How much was a young person, at so immature an age, exposed to the stratagems and wiles of an experienced seducer! A better judge of morals than she could pretend to be, had pronounced, that deep and exemplary penitence for an unwary fault, was a fuller security for rectitude, than inno-

innocence itself*. Mrs. Macneil, her advocate added, had been distinguished when a child, for the strength of her judgment and the delicacy of her sentiments; once she had fallen; but she had speedily recovered; and malice itself could not discover a blemish in her since that period. Might she not, if her present character was such as it was represented, be a more perfect monitor for the young, in proportion as she understood more of the evils against which she warned them, and had felt the calamity? The lady who maintained this side of the argument said, that she did not pretend to dispute the propriety of the rule, by which mrs. Macneil was given up almost exclusively to the society of the other sex, but added, that a humane judge would often drop a tear of pity, over the severity of the sentence he was

* Luke, chap. xv, ver. 7.

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compelled to pronounce. Why, though mrs. Macneil could never atone to the rules of established decorum, should we refuse to believe, that she had atoned to God, and to the principles of rectitude? Why, though she was forbidden the society of her sex, should the same prohibition be extended to her daughters? Indeed most of the ladies in the neighbourhood of the lakes, had felt the propriety of the distinction, and had been eager to afford them every countenance in their power. She understood from the most undoubted authority, that they were brought up with a refinement and rigidness of sentiment, in every point with which modesty was concerned, beyond what was furnished by any other living example of female education. Their father was the most faultless and unexceptionable in his habits, of any gentleman in all the northern counties; and, if propriety of character in young

women

women could be secured by the diligence, discernment and rectitude of both their parents, there were no persons of their age who bid fairer to be an ornament to their sex than the miss Macneils.

All that I heard of mr. Macneil and his family, inspired in me the wish not to quit Westmorland, till I had seen them. The father of the family was represented as extremely attached to his wife; and, as her unfortunate history rendered her liable to little slights and affronts, he shrunk from all intercourse with his provincial neighbours. He would not accept any privilege from the males of a house, which might only serve to remind him of the severe law dealt out to the partner of his life. He felt too intimately for her honour, her pleasures and her pains, to be capable of being persuaded of the justice of the treatment she received. In truth, as I understood from the most exact infor-

mation, it was no great sacrifice he made, in giving up the conversation of his rural neighbours. He had resources enough in himself and the inmates of his own roof. They were far the most polished and elegant family, if politeness consists in intellectual refinement, in the circuit of the lakes. He had accumulated from the living society of men of genius, the materials and the principles of thinking. The young ladies excelled in the arts of music and design. The mother had paid dear for her progress in the former of these; but her progress was conspicuous. They frequently made little concerts under their own roof. They read together, and compared the impressions they received from, and the judgments they formed upon, what they read. They spent solitary hours enough in the sobriety of the morning, to inspire them with a zest for each other's society in the latter part of the day. Mr. Macneil, as

children's improvement. A
therefore no knowledge, no ta
ing, no moral sentiment, no s
or deduction which his sagacit
in his own bosom. All his t
this sort were brought into th
stock. In this happy family
no discordant opinions, no on
say, "This is rash; that is
this is contrary to the judgme
world; you must learn to
others, or you must expect
liked;" and thus to chill th
blossoms of reflection and
They needed not to be told, th
is afraid to think unlike others

truded upon by stragglers, whom the fashion of an excursion to the lakes had brought to his door. Some came with letters of recommendation, and some without. Some were induced by curiosity to see the friend of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and some to see the lady who had two husbands, both of them living. With the improper conduct and indelicacy of one or two of these wanderers mr. Macneil had been highly displeased. He had desired his friends to yield no more letters of introduction to the mere importunities of the idle. He saw no reason why he should suffer his time to be intruded upon, and his serenity to be ruffled, by the curiosity of indolent travellers who did not know how to dispose of themselves. The lady, the advocate of mrs. Macneil, to whom I communicated my wish, did not fail therefore to assure me, that I should not gain entrance over the threshold of their house. This

unfavourable prediction perhaps piqued me the more, and I sat down, and addressed the following letter to the gentleman whose acquaintance I was desirous to obtain.

SIR,

I HAVE heard your character described in a way so peculiarly conformable to my notions and predilections, that I am desirous to be indulged with an hour of your conversation.

You have been intruded upon, I am told, by the idle and the frivolous; you are a lover of solitude; you are happy in the bosom of your family: these are the reasons which have been alleged to me, why I ought not to expect to obtain the favour I solicit. I shall at least weaken the objections which have been urged, if I can satisfy you that I am not of the class of the persons who have occasioned your displeasure.

I am

I am no curious man: what have I to be curious about? I am nearly forty-five years of age. I have seen the world, through all its gradations, and in most of the countries of Europe. In my youth I was a wild roe among the mountains of Wales: as I grew up, I entered upon the scenes of active life, foolishly, not criminally. I contracted an early distaste for the practices and the society of the world. I have lived much alone —I have not been happy. When I have gone into company, mere acquaintance have not interested me; a friend (a friend, in the perhaps romantic sense of the word) I never found. I am no doubt a very weak creature; I am not like Solomon's good man, "satisfied from myself." Such is my history; am I one of those persons whose intrusion you would wish to forbid?

Why am I desirous to pay one visit to the roof of mr. Macneil? I know not whether

## CHAPTER XIII.

My application had the desired issue. A polite answer was returned, expressing that mr. Macneil would be happy to be favoured with my visit. I was the more flattered with this, as the lady to whom I had mentioned my desire, a woman of no common sagacity, had predicted a different event.

I hastened to make use of the privilege I had obtained. I found the house of mr. Macneil uncommonly plain in its style, yet replete with every temperate convenience. The father of the family seemed to be upward of fifty years of age, and was tall, robust and manly in his appearance. His hair was brown, short and unpowdered; his ruddy cheek confessed that he was not negligent of the

the care of his fields, and that he had received in his constitution the reward of his care. Mr. Macneil was a Scotchman. The brogue of every country is perhaps pleasing to the ear of sensibility, especially when it falls from the lips of a man of cultivation; it seems to assure us that simplicity and the native features of mind have not been eradicated. With me the Scottish dialect is somewhat a favourite; it softens and mellows the sound of our island tongue; and the gravity which accompanies it, gives an air of sobriety and reflection to the speaker, which are particularly in accord with my serious disposition. It reminds us of the fields, and not of cities.

I thank you for your visit, said mr. Macneil, taking me by the hand. Your letter is a masterly picture of your character. I know not what you have heard of me that made you desirous of seeing

me; but I suspect that I, rather than you, shall be the gainer by the intercourse. I am no humourist, nor misanthrope, though circumstances have obliged me to be a little abrupt with some of the persons I have seen since I took up my residence here. I am a very plain man, and, if you expect any thing else, you will be disappointed.

I did not find mr. Macneil what I should have called a very plain man, yet I do not blame him for his assertion. It would be best of all, if every man knew himself exactly for what he was, and announced himself accordingly. But this, alas! is impossible. Every one who does not think too humbly of his qualities, sets too high a value upon them. And how ridiculous a thing is self-importance, a fancied sovereign demanding a tax from his imaginary subjects, which they will never pay! False humility is indeed, if not a more ridiculous,

yet

yet a more degrading error than arrogance. But every man who is aware of all the artifices of self-delusion, will rather set his demands below, than above, the true rate.

Among other subjects we talked of the character of Rousseau. Mr. Macneil expressed himself with a veneration and a tenderness toward this extraordinary man, which I suppose were universally felt by all who approached him, except those who, thinking less of his weaknesses and the indulgence they demanded, than of their own offended pride, finished by quarrelling with him.

I saw much of Rousseau, said my host. He reposed many confidences in me. He often told me that he felt less suspicious and embarrassed with me, than with almost any man he ever knew; and he asserted that the reason was, that I thought more of the subject discussed and the scene before me, and less of how

how they would affect my own tranquillity and importance. I could see that one of his great misfortunes had been, that almost all his intimates were chosen from among the French, that nation of egotists! Rousseau was a man of exquisite sensibility, and that sensibility had been insulted and trifled with in innumerable instances, sometimes by the intolerance of priestcraft and power, sometimes by the wanton and ungenerous sports of men of letters. He lived however, toward the close of his life, in a world of his own, and saw nothing as it really was; nor were his mistakes less gross, than if he had asserted that his little cottage was menaced by a besieging army, and assailed with a battery of cannon. Whether from the displeasing events that had befallen him, or from any seeds of disease kneaded up in his original constitution, I was convinced, from a multitude of indications, that

Rousseau

Rousseau was not in his sober mind. How much are those persons mistaken, who imagine that a madman is necessarily incapable of composing orations as ardent as those of Demosthenes, and odes as sublime as those of Pindar! How small a portion of the persons who, upon some topic or other, are unhinged in their intellectual comprehension, is it necessary to place under corporal restraint!—Yet I was often led to doubt whether Rousseau, spite of the disease under which he laboured, deserved upon the whole to be termed unfortunate. When he was induced to dwell for a time upon the universal combination which he believed to be formed against him, he then undoubtedly suffered. But he had such resources in his own mind! He could so wholly abstract himself from this painful contemplation; his vein of enthusiasm was so sublime; there was such a childlike simplicity often uppermost

most in his carriage; his gaiety upon certain occasions was so good-humoured, sportive and unbroken! It was difficult to persuade myself that the person I saw at such times, was the same as, at others, was beset with such horrible visions.—Mr. Macneil related to me several curious anecdotes in support of these observations.

The wife of my new acquaintance was one of the most accomplished and prepossessing women I ever beheld. I have often remarked that this mixture and result of the manners and habits of different countries, particularly in the female sex, presents something exquisitely fascinating and delightful. She was never embarrassed, and never appeared to meditate how a thing was to be done, but did it with an ease, a simplicity, an unpretendingness, which threw every studied grace into contempt in the comparison. She had been humbled by the

the miscarriage of her early youth. But for this, her person and her accomplishments, the acknowledged sweetness of her temper and clearness of her understanding, might perhaps have made her proud, and thus have tarnished the genuine lustre of her excellencies. The modesty with which she presented herself was inexpressibly engaging. There was a cast of the Magdalene in all she did; not of the desponding, not of a temper deserting its duties, unconscious of recovered worth, or that invited insolence or contempt. It was a manner that had something in it of timidity, yet could scarcely be said to amount to self-reproach; a manner indeed, that, by the way in which it confessed her frailty, made reproach, either by look or gesture, from any other, impossible. Her failings had chastised in her the pride of birth, and the assurance that superior attainments are apt to inspire, and had generated

generated that temperance, moderation and gentle firmness, which, wherever they are found, are the brightest ornaments of human nature.

The young ladies, whose merits I had heard so highly extolled, were three. Each of these had principally devoted herself to some particular accomplishment, in which, though not unskilled in other pursuits, she had made extraordinary progress. The eldest applied to the art of design; she drew, and even painted in oil; and her landscapes in particular had an excellence which, to speak moderately of them, reminded the beholder of the style of Claude Lorraine. The principal apartment of the house was hung round with a series of the most striking scenes in the environs of the lakes, delineated by her pencil. The second daughter had chosen music for her favourite pursuit, and her execution, both on the piano forte and in singing,

was

was not inferior to that which her eldest sister had attained on canvas. The youngest was a gardener and botanist. She had laid out her father's grounds, and the style in which they were disposed did the highest credit to her imagination. One side of the family sitting-parlour was skirted with a greenhouse, of the same length as the room, and which seemed to make a part of it. This apartment was furnished with nearly every variety which Flora has ever produced in our island, or which curiosity has imported, and were entirely cultivated by her hand. In her prosecution of the science of botany, she had also resorted to the use of colours, and, though the employment she made of them was inferior in kind to the studies of the eldest, it is almost impossible to conceive any thing superior to what she had reached, either in the faith-

faithfulness of delineation, or the brilliancy of the tints.

The names of these young ladies were Amelia, Barbara and Mary. The eldest had no pretensions to beauty, though there was an uncommon appearance of quick conception and penetrating judgment in the various turns of her countenance. Barbara was a brunette. Her features were regular, her mouth was alluring, and her dark eyes flashed with meaning, and melted with tenderness. Mary had a complexion which, in point of fairness and transparency, could not be excelled. Her blood absolutely spoke in her cheeks; the soft white of her hands and neck looked as if they would have melted away beneath your touch; her eyes were so animated, and her whole physiognomy so sensitive, that it was scarcely possible to believe that a thought could pass in her heart,

heart, which might not be read in her face.

I never saw a family that excited in me so much approbation. Individuals I had encountered of great worth and extraordinary qualifications; but here was a whole circle of persons, such as a man would wish to spend his life with: so much concord of affection, without any jarring passions; so much harmony of interests, yet each member of the family having a different pursuit. To me, who was prone to regard the whole world with an eye of censoriousness and displeasure, and who, having conceived this propensity, but too easily found materials to foster and nourish it, this was a ravishing spectacle. The father so well informed; the mother so interesting; the daughters so accomplished and so lovely! Mr. Macneil seemed to feel a kindness for me, proportioned to the gratification I experienced in my visit; and, after having

having pressed me to partake of their family-fare, proposed a ride along the shores of the Windermere the next morning. The day following was occupied in a party on the lake; and thus by insensible degrees I became for a time almost an inmate in the family. I was so far advanced in life, as to preclude any idea of indecorum in my visits; and I addressed myself to the different members of the little commonwealth, as if I had been a brother to the master of the house, and an uncle to the daughters. I sat sometimes for hours by Amelia as she painted; I listened with unwearied attention to the lessons executed by Barbara: but my chief pleasure was in attending the gentle and engaging Mary, in her morning visits to her flowers, and in her walks among the avenues which had been constructed, and the bowers which had been planted, under her direction.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XIV.

MR. MACNEIL was a man of the warmest philanthropy, and by degrees I reposed in him a confidence, to which I had seldom felt excited toward any other man. After a time, I hired apartments in the house of a substantial farmer in his neighbourhood, that I might the more freely enjoy his conversation and acquaintance, without being an interruption to the domestic economy of his family. I laid before him the secret grief that preyed upon my heart. I described the sickly sensibility of my temper, the early disgust I had taken at the world, and the miserable sense of desolation which preyed upon my life, in my detached and unconnected situation.

Come, replied my friend, in that vein of

of playful good-humour which he delighted to indulge,—whether you consult me, as a good Catholic does his priest, for the salvation of his soul, or as an invalid does his physician for the restoration of his health, let us try if we cannot make a conversion or a cure of it!

Many were the debates that passed between me and my host respecting the true estimate of the human species. We differed, I suppose first, because we had seen them under unlike circumstances, and in unlike aspects. We differed secondly, because we compared them with different ideal standards. I thought, so to express myself, too highly of the human mind in the abstract, to be able to consider with patience man as he is. I dwelt upon the capacities of our nature, the researches of a Newton, the elevation of a Milton, and the virtues of an Alfred; and, having filled my mind with

these, I contemplated even with horror, the ignorance, the brutality, the stupidity, the selfishness, and, as it appeared to me, the venality and profligacy, in which millions and millions of my fellow-creatures are involved. I estimated mankind, with an eye to the goal which it is ardently to be desired they might reach; mr. Macneil estimated them, with an eye to the starting-post from which they commenced their career.

"In every man that lives," he stoutly affirmed, "there is much to commend. Every man has in him the seeds of a good husband, a good father, and a sincere friend. You will say perhaps, these are not sublime and magnificent virtues; yet, if each man were enabled to discharge these, the world upon the whole would afford a ravishing spectacle. What a spirit of forbearance, of gentle attentions, of anxiety to maintain the cheerfulness and peace of his female companion,

panion, inhabits every human breast! Scarcely do we hear of the monster in whom this spirit is ever extinguished. It accompanies almost all men, with whatever unhappy interruptions, from maturity to the grave. Look upon the poorest clown in the midst of his children; what a heavenly picture! How do his eyes glisten at their little pleasures, their sallies of penetration and vivacity! How disinterested a sentiment burns in his heart! Yes, disinterested for I know you will laugh at the silly sophism, which, when it regards the immense sacrifices that every father is ready to make for his child, calls the impulse from which they spring a selfish one. I acknowledge, I am weak enough to be as much delighted with the spectacle of the lively and ardent affection of an Englishman to his son, as if it were directed toward the child of a Japonese. It is equally affection, and equally beneficent.

ficent. How much good neighbourhood there is in the world! what readiness in every man to assist every stranger that comes in his way, if his carriage is broken down, if his horse has run from and left him, or almost whatever is his distress! how cheerfully does he give his day's labour, or the produce of his day's labour, to his friend, till that friend by injustice have proved himself unworthy of the kindness! For my part, instead of joining in the prevailing cry of the selfishness, the wickedness, the original sin, or the subsequent depravity, of mankind, I feel my heart swell within me, when I recollect that I belong to a species, almost every individual of which is endowed with angelic virtues. I am a philanthropist in the plain sense of the word. Wherever I see a man, I see something to love,—not with a love of compassion, but a love of approbation. I need not put the question to him—I

know without asking, that he is fully prepared and eager to do a thousand virtuous acts, the moment the occasion is afforded him.

" I have sometimes had the thought," continued mr. Macneil, " of composing a little novel or tale in illustration of my position. I would take such a man, as my friend Fleetwood, for example, who looks with a disdainful eye upon his species, and has scarcely the patience to enter into discourse and intercourse with any one he meets: I would put him on board a ship; he will of course be sufficiently disgusted with every one of his companions: all of a sudden I would raise a most furious tempest: I would cause him to be shipwrecked on a desert island, with no companion but one man, the most gross, perverse and stupid of the crew: all the rest—the captain who, though sagacious, was positive, the surgeon who, though skilful, was tire-

some

some by his pedantry—I would without mercy send to the bottom. What do you think I would represent as the natural result of this situation? My fastidious misanthrope would no longer have a world or a nation, from which to chuse his companion, and, after trying all, to reject all: he would be wholly deprived of the power of choice. Here, sir, I would show how by degrees he would find a thousand resources in this despised sailor. He would find him active, spirited and alert. Where before he believed, without examination, that all was stupefaction, he would find by a variety of tokens, good sense and sagacity. How these two companions would love one another! How they would occasionally spend the live-long night in delightful chat! How they would study each other's virtues and attainments, even each other's foibles! With what eager anxiety, when any necessary oc-

they defend each other from dang
And do not be perverse enoug
lieve that all this anxiety w
the fruit of selfishness! They
have discovered in each other ine
qualities, a large stock of soun
ment and excellent sense, and
haustible fund of kind and be
propensities. After some years
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land. Sir, he would never be
part with his companion in th
island. He would believe tha
was not a creature in the wor
him for all in all, so valuable.
serve, he would only entertain

man nature in one of its most unfavourable forms."

I hope my reader will be convinced by the arguments of mr. Macneil. What a blessed state of mind was that, to which he appears to have attained! Yet, for myself, I acknowledge, either because truth was on my side, or, it may be, merely from the excessive susceptibleness of my nature, or the accidents of my life, I remained unaltered by his discourses, and, though I wished to be a philanthropist, was a misanthrope still.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XV.

"WHAT I have been yet saying," continued Macneil, "is speculation; let us now come to the most important part of my function, which is practice. Fleetwood, you are too much alone. I hear people talk of the raptures of solitude; and with what tenderness of affection they can love a tree, a rivulet, or a mountain. Believe me, they are pretenders; they deceive themselves, or they seek, with their eyes open, to impose upon others. In addition to their trees and their mountains, I will give them the whole brute creation; still it will not do. There is a principle in the heart of man, which demands the society of his like. He that has no such society, is in a state but one degree removed

moved from insanity. He pines for an ear into which he might pour the story of his thoughts, for an eye that shall flash upon him with responsive intelligence, for a face the lines of which shall talk to him in dumb, but eloquent discourse, for a heart that shall beat in unison with his own. If there is any thing in human form that does not feel these wants, that thing is not to be counted in the file for a man; the form it bears is a deception, and the legend, Man, which you read in its front, is a lie. Talk to me of rivers and mountains! I venerate the grand and beautiful exhibitions and shapes of nature, no man more; I delight in solitude; I could shut myself up in it for successive days. But I know, that Christ did not with more alacrity come out of the wilderness after his forty days' sequestration, than every man, at the end of a course of this sort, will seek for the interchange

change of sentiments and language. The magnificence of nature, after a time, will produce much the same effect upon him, as if I were to set down a hungry man to a sumptuous service of plate, where all that presented itself on every side was massy silver and burnished gold, but there was no food.

"He is a wise physician, that knows how to prescribe for his own malady. Were the case you have described to me, the case of a bystander, you would immediately see into its merits, as clearly as I do. You have no certain and regular pursuit; you have no equal alliances and connections. The miracle would be, if it were possible for you to be happy. You are too rich, to be able to engage with sincere eagerness in any undertaking or employment. The remedy therefore in your case must be derived from the other quarter. Marry! beget yourself a family of children! You

You are somewhat advanced in life; time must elapse before your children will be at an age to occupy much of your cares; if you feel any vacuity in the interval, call about you your distant relations! Sit down every day at table with a circle of five or six persons, constituting your own domestic groupe. Enquire out the young men on the threshold of life, who, from the regulations of society, have the best claim upon your assistance. Call them round you; contribute to their means; contribute to their improvement; consult with them as to the most promising adventure in which they can launch themselves on the ocean of life. Depend upon it, you will not then feel a vacuity; your mind will no longer prey upon itself."

I was some time before I could believe that my friend was in earnest.—"I, to entangle myself with a numerous family, whose temper was so fastidious and sen-

sitive that I could scarcely chuse a companion for a day, that did not become in twenty ways disgusting and insupportable to me before the close of the day!

"I, to marry! Had I not now passed the flower of my days in a state of celibacy? Whom was I to marry? I was near forty-five years of age. Was I to make what is called a suitable match; that is, marry a woman of the same age as myself? Beside that there would then be small chance of offspring, I could not say I felt in myself much propensity to fall in love with a lady of this staid and matronly age.

"Add to all this, I am impressed with no favourable prepossessions toward the female sex. I cannot be blind enough to credit what some have maintained, probably more from the love of paradox than any other cause, that there is any parity between the sexes. Till the softer

sex

sex has produced a Bacon, a Newton, a Homer, or a Shakespear, I never will believe it. Who does not see that the quickness and vivacity of their temper sets them at an immense distance from profound sense, sublime feeling, and that grand species of adventure, which engrosses, from puberty to the grave, the whole energies of the human soul? But, beside this, I think ill of their dispositions. The impressions of my adventures of gallantry in France I cannot overcome. Perhaps, in the tranquillity of sober discussion, you might bring me to confess that these impressions are unjust; but there they are; such are the associations of my mind; I never can think seriously of a woman, still less propose her to myself as a companion, without calling to mind the marchioness de L., and the countess of B.

"I have another disqualification for marriage, worse even than this. I am grown

grown old in the habits of a bachelor. I can bear no restraint. You, sir, happy as you are in your family, must be fully aware, that it is impossible for two persons to associate for a day, without some clash of their different inclinations. It is like hounds in a leash; the chain is upon their necks, and not upon their wills. But we bear this wonderfully well for a time, because we see where it will end; most men bear it better than I do. But let the chain be such the padlock of which cannot be unloosed, but by the death of one party or the other; Gods, how galling does it become! In an 'agreeable companion in a post-chaise,' in the guest that visits, or the host that receives, me for a day, though his desires are absurd, though his manner be abrupt, and his sentiments dissimilar to my own, I am too proud to suffer my temper to be much ruffled by so fugitive an inconvenience. But how

trifles swell into importance, when the individual whose temper jars with mine, is to live with me for ever! Whatever offends me I feel as in the utmost degree grave; every accidental difference preys upon my heart, and corrodes my vitals."

Mr. Macneil laughed at the vehemence of my satire against marriage. "No," said he, "I do not absolutely insist, that you shall fix upon a lady of forty-five years of age, or that you shall estimate her fitness to become your wife by the wrinkles in her brow. The man may love the wife at forty-five, whom, twenty years before, he received a blushing virgin to his bed; habit may do much for him; a friendship has gradually sprung up between them, which death only is powerful enough to dissolve; but this is not exactly the period at which the familiarity should commence. No; if you marry, Fleetwood, chuse

chuse a girl, whom no disappointments have soured, and no misfortunes have bent to the earth; let her be lively, gay as the morning, and smiling as the day. If your habits are somewhat rooted and obstinate, take care that there is no responsive stiffness in her, to jar and shock with. Let her be all pliancy, accommodation and good-humour. Form her to your mind; educate her yourself. By thus grafting a young shoot upon your venerable trunk, you will obtain, as it were, a new hold upon life. You will be another creature; new views, new desires, new thoughts, will rise within you. While you are anxious to please and sympathise with your beauteous bride, you will feel as alert as a boy, and as free and rapid in your conceptions as a stripling.

"You will tell me perhaps, that you could not make such a young creature happy. I differ from you in that. The women

women are not like us in their tastes. A lady, as you say, past the meridian of life, will seldom be courted for a bride, unless with some sinister view; but at least half the young girls you meet with, would be well contented with a husband considerably older than themselves. Man marries, because he desires a lovely and soothing companion for his vacant hours; woman marries, because she feels the want of a protector, a guardian, a guide and an oracle, some one to look up to with respect, and in whose judgment and direction she may securely confide. Besides, Fleetwood, you mistake yourself, if you think you are old. Your visage is not wrinkled, and your hair is not grey. The activity of your temper, the many plans of life you have tried, your perpetual change of place, have effectually preserved you from that running down of the wheels of fancy, that decay of the principle of life, which should

should render you an unfit companion for a blooming bride.

"You allege, that your temper, which is so fastidious and sensitive that you can seldom support the companion of a day, is a cause that would reduce you to make an ill figure, in a domestic circle, with five or six individuals who sat down with you every day to table. Alas, Fleetwood, this is the very thing you want, the cause why your temper is so blameably fastidious. The horse, however generous his blood, and graceful his limbs, who has never learned certain paces, and had his temper subdued to the intimations of the bridle, will never be victor in the race. Subject yourself to the law of associating with your fellow-men, place yourself in the situation to be the guardian and benefactor of your consort and kindred, and you will soon feel and bend to the necessity of consulting their predilections as well as your

your own. You will be a million times the better and the happier for it.

"But the main error into which you have fallen, is to suppose that the way of living between a man and his wife, bears any resemblance to that with a chance-companion in a post-chaise, or between an ordinary host and his guest. The first principle of society in this relation, if it is actuated with any spirit of kindness, is the desire each party feels, to be the sacrifice of the other. Instead of regretting the unavoidable differences of inclination, they become, where the topics to which they relate are not fundamental, an additional source of pleasure. Each party is eager to anticipate the desires of the other, to smooth the way to their gratification, to provide for their happiness. If, between a pair thus kind and thus wise, any little debates chance to arise, this too adds to their enjoyment.

joyment. You know the proverb which says, The falling out of lovers is the renewal of love. Between man and man differences are gravely discussed and argumentatively settled. Each revises the imaginary brief of his own cause, and becomes confirmed in his private view of the question at issue. But, between man and woman, the smile which unexpectedly displaces the clouded brow, is the symbol of peace. Arguments are thrust away by hundreds, like beggars from the façade of a palace. The party most in the right, mourns over this degrading advantage. The party most in the wrong, confesses the error incurred with so ingenuous a grace, as to make error look as if it gave new improvement and finishing to a character.—Marry, Fleetwood! If you live, marry! You know nothing of happiness, if you do not! You are as ignorant of the true zest

zest of human life, as the oak which at this moment overcanopies us with its branches!"

Such were the advices of the intelligent and kind-hearted friend I had thus accidentally acquired. They made a strong impression upon me. I know not whether the impression would have been so forcible, had the circumstances under which the advice was given been different. But the reader must recollect that it was addressed to me in the midst of an amiable family, the children of which were daughters. While Macneil was earnest in describing the sort of wife he would recommend to me, I thought of these accomplished young women: when we returned home from the walk or ride which these discussions had occupied, I looked round upon the circle, with different emotions from those which had previously accompanied the spectacle: could it be otherwise? I

have

have already said that the junior of the three particularly engaged my attention: I now caught myself repeatedly in my solitude uttering the involuntary exclamation, "Mary, if ever I marry, it is thou that shalt be my bride!"

The conversations between me and my host, the sense of which I have thus compressed, occupied many successive excursions. One day when Macneil was most deeply engaged in the argument, I turned suddenly upon him, and cried out somewhat gaily, "Now, my friend, shall I try whether you are in earnest in all this declamation? If such a marriage as you describe is desirable for me, it will be no less desirable for the woman I shall chuse; one of the parties in wedlock cannot be happy alone. You say, I should chuse a young person, a person of pleasing manners, and a cultivated mind: where can I verify this description so truly, as by your fire-side?

Will

Will you give me one of your daughters?"

My friend paused. "A question like this compels one to be serious indeed.—But——you have no grave meaning in proposing the interrogatory?"

"I cannot tell. Your arguments have made me think: I do not say they have converted me. Macneil, I do not wish to trifle with you: if my question touches you too nearly, I dispense you from a reply."

"No; the question has been asked, and it shall be answered. Only, as I by no means wish to restrain you, by treating your question as a proposal, so I must request you in return to consider my answer, as belonging merely to an abstract illustration, as a logical experiment to try the soundness of my recommendation. I should be as much to blame in violating the modesty and maiden dignity of my children, as in imposing

posing fetters of any sort on the freedom of your deliberations."

"Agreed! Nothing can be more reasonable."

'Well then; I have no objection to your person, your family, your fortune, your understanding, your accomplishments, not even to your age. But then as to your temper,——

"Ay, there is the point!"

"What a strange thing is advice! How difficult is it to put one's self exactly in the place of another? How hard, to be sure that the advice we give, is exactly that which we should think reasonable, could we change persons with the man upon whom we are so ready to obtrude it? Fleetwood, I swear that I am your friend: I swear that the project I urged upon you, was urged in the sincerity of my heart."——

"*Io, triumphe!* I see, I shall die a bachelor!"——Shall I confess my secret

weakness? My *Io, triumphe*, was uttered with a heavy heart. The lovely Mary had gained a station in my bosom, from which I felt I could with difficulty dislodge her.

"I love my children; you, all the world, would despise me if I did not. It is so difficult to judge for a child, conscious of unripened discernment, and relying on my superior penetration and experience, or by whom, if this reliance is not placed, it clearly ought to be! I could cheerfully commit my own happiness to the lottery of human affairs, but thus to dispose of the little all of one's daughter, is a fearful responsibility!——

"Yet, after all, this responsibility I must encounter. If my daughter marries a wise man or a fool, a prodigal or an economist, an honest man or a knave, and it is done with my approbation, it must alike happen, that I may con-

consider myself as the author of her happiness or her misery.

"Well then, Fleetwood, I confess that the woman who marries you, will engage in a considerable risk. But, God knows, all marriage is a risk, is the deepest game that can be played in this sublunary scene. You say true, that your risk will not be less, than that of the dame who accepts your hand. Yet I adhere to my advice, 'Marry!' or, which is indeed merely dressing that advice in another guise, 'Fleetwood, take the child of my bosom! win her partiality and kindness; my approbation waits on her preference!'

"By this question however, which, as I said, I have answered merely under the notion of a logical experiment, you have brought to my recollection a part of the subject, which, before, I ought not to have forgotten; and I thank you for it.

If

If you should ever feel seriously disposed to adopt my recommendation, let it not be done lightly and unadvisedly. Consider it as the most important transaction of your life. Consider that not merely your own happiness, but that of the woman who has consented to embark hers under your protection, the virtue and respectability of your possible offspring, and the peace of the venerable parents who have resigned her to your discretion, are at stake upon the due regulation of your temper. Here indeed lies the great difference between your present condition, and that which I have been chalking out for you. Independent and sole as you now stand, you find yourself answerable to none: you can discard your servants when you please; you can break off with your acquaintance; and you need scarcely deign to ask yourself, Was I in fault? But you cannot so break off from the ties of

affinity and blood. Believe me, too much independence is not good for man. It conduces neither to his virtue, nor his happiness. The discipline which arises out of the domestic charities, has an admirable tendency to make man, individually considered, what man ought to be. I do not think you, Fleetwood, worse than your neighbours. You are an honest and a just man, with sense enough to discern the right, and courage enough to pursue it. If you are now wayward and peevish and indolent and hypochondriacal, it is because you weakly hover on the outside of the pale of human society, instead of gallantly entering yourself in the ranks, and becoming one in the great congregation of man."

It was in such conversation that Macneil and I passed our time in our excursions on the banks of the Windermere. With what delight I recollect this happy interval of my life! Ruffigny and Macneil

neil were the only two men I ever knew, the clearness of whose thinking was an ever fresh source of delight, and the generosity of whose souls, enlightening their discourse, made their face occasionally look, as if it had been the face of an angel. But in the society of Macneil my happiness was even purer than in that of my father's friend. Ruffigny, gallant, noble-hearted mortal as he was, stood alone; my intercourse with him was a perpetual *tête à tête*, and had too much of monotony and uniformity for the unsatisfied cravings of the human mind; but to return home with Macneil, after a morning's temperate and sober discussion, and to see him surrounded with his blameless wife and accomplished daughters, what could the heart of man look for more? Add to which, I was occupied with the new sensations which agitated my bosom for the charming Mary. While I talked with her, I for-

got my prejudices against her sex; the marchioness de L. and the countess of B. seemed daily more and more to become the shadow of a dream; her conversation was so inexpressibly ingenuous, and her sallies so artless, that, in spite of my preconceptions, she stole away my heart. Her delight was in flowers; and she seemed like one of the beauties of her own parterre, soft and smooth and brilliant and fragrant and unsullied.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XVI.

WHY did these days of yet unexperienced delight pass so quickly away! Mr. Macneil, before I knew him, had determined to pass over with his family to Italy, with the intention of spending the remainder of his days there. He had a friend in the Milanese with whom he had contracted the strictest bonds of intimacy, and who had often pressed him to take up his residence in his neighbourhood; he was promised that circle of female associates and acquaintance, which was denied to mrs. Macneil in England; and this, though the admirable matron could have dispensed with it for herself without repining, he judged to be an advantage of the first importance to his daugh-

daughters. Having formed a project of this sort, he had proceeded so far as to have settled to dispose of all his property in England, and to vest his fortune in lands to be purchased on the spot of his destined abode. The affairs which related to this intended transplantation had already detained the family in England longer than they wished; and I agreed to purchase the Westmorland estate, rather to facilitate the projects of my friend, than with any intention to take up my residence in this part of the island. The property was transmitted, and lodged in the hands of a banker at Genoa; and mr. Macneil determined to take his passage by sea, from Falmouth for that city. The adventurers in this voyage were mr. Macneil, his wife, and his two eldest daughters; the youngest was to remain, at least till the next season, upon a visit to a family, who in the winter

winter resided in London, and during the summer upon their estate in Gloucestershire.

Every thing being prepared for the journey, the whole establishment removed from the Windermere, and set out for Falmouth, I myself, as well as the charming cadette, making part of the escort. I shall not dwell upon the particulars of a tour, stretching almost from one extremity of the kingdom to another; we reached the celebrated and commodious port from which my friends were to take their passage. Here we spent a period of seven or eight days, which was rendered so much the more interesting to me, as I knew not whether I should ever meet this amiable family again, and as it seemed to be at the mercy of the winds whether almost every hour of our intercourse should be the last.

The day after our arrival, Macneil and

and myself took an excursion on the sea coast and among the cliffs, to explore the beauties of this delicious country. Previously to our quitting the borders of the lakes, I had come to a more precise explanation with my friend, of the thoughts I entertained respecting his youngest daughter. The removal, which was impending, had brought on somewhat the more hastily the communication of my views. I fairly confessed that the married life was now much in my thoughts; and I owned that the eyes of Mary had perhaps contributed more to my conversion, than the arguments of her father. My friend asked me, if I had ever opened myself to her on the subject, or was informed of the state of her inclination toward me?

I owned, I had not. The subject was in itself so interesting, and was so new to my thoughts, that, whenever the impulse of confessing my partiality had pre-

presented itself to me, it had always brought with it such a palpitation of the heart, and tremulousness of voice, as had compelled me for the time to desist from my purpose. Nor could there ever, in any mind, be sufficient reason for an early declaration, except where the parties were so circumstanced, that they could not otherwise have the opportunity of a protracted intercourse, and a more minute acquaintance with each other's qualifications and temper. Was it not much more gratifying to a delicate mind, by silent attentions to steal away the soul, and to observe the gradual demonstrations of kindness in a mistress, growing up unconsciously to herself, than by an abrupt question to compel her to check or to anticipate the progress of sentiment?

Should I own the truth? Whenever I meditated the proposing of the question, I was immediately beset in two

ways with the passion of fear. I feared to be refused: else why did I put the question? I also feared to be accepted: perhaps no ingenuous mind, not yet lost to a serious anticipation of the future, could be free from that fear. It was a question of so deep a stake, to both the parties to whom it related! The man who was about to form it, could scarcely help recollecting on the verge, Now I am free; I am master of my own actions and of my plans of life: before the clock shall strike again, it may be I shall be bound by the sacred ties of honour, and the fate of my future life will be at the disposal of another! The season of courtship is, at least to the man who has outlived the first heyday of his boiling blood, a season of probation; it is the business of either party to study the other, and in each interview distinctly to enquire, "Is this the person with whom I ought to embark in the voyage

of

of life? Every species of promise, express or implicit, ought to be kept back, that he may preserve, as long as possible, the healthful and genuine character of the scene in which he is engaged.

"Farewel," said Macneil in the close of the interesting conversation in which we were engaged. "I leave my daughter behind me; and I may say, I leave her in your protection. The family with which she is to spend the winter are very good sort of people; but they are people of fashion, and without hearts. No man knows any thing amiss of them; they are correct in their methods of acting, and punctual in their payments; I feel satisfied that nothing amiss can happen to my daughter, while she is an inmate of their house. But it is to your sentiments, as a man of worth and honour, that I confide her. I believe, she approves of you; I think she will accept of your tender, if you shall judge proper to make

make it. In this, it is of course as much your desire, as it is mine, that she should be free. Fleetwood, it is a very deep and solemn confidence that I repose in you. If you marry my daughter, you must be to her, father, and mother, and sisters, and all the world in one. If you are unjust to her, she will have no one to whom to appeal. If you are capricious, and rigorous, and unreasonable, she will be your prisoner!"

This pathetic appeal from the father of her I loved, suddenly filled my eyes with a gush of tears. I eagerly pressed his hand. "Macneil," said I, "I will never be unjust to your daughter; she shall never find me capricious, or rigorous, or unreasonable. I swear to you, that I will be such a husband, as the most tender of fathers would choose for his daughter!"—It will be seen how I kept my oath.

After the interval of a few days we parted.

parted. I will not repeat here what mrs. Macneil said to me concerning her child, as that would be to go over again in substance what had been already said by the father. This accomplished woman never appeared so amiable to me as during our short residence at Falmouth. She had as much right, perhaps more, than her husband, to urge upon me the justice I should owe to the lovely Mary. Never had any mother more affectionately or more diligently discharged the duties of a parent; never was mother more amply qualified to discharge them.

I, and Mary, and one of the daughters of the family with whom Mary was invited to visit, attended the rest of the party in a boat, to the side of the vessel in which they embarked for Genoa. We went with them on board the ship, and spent still two hours more in their company. Never was a family so equally or

so strongly inspired with love for each other, as the groupe before me.

"Why am I not going with you?" said Mary.

"Do not talk of that," replied the mother; "we shall else never be able to leave you behind."

CHAP.

## CHAPTER XVII.

I ATTENDED on horseback the chaise which conveyed Mary, and the young lady, her companion, to London. Having fixed her there, I was obliged to set out on an excursion of a few weeks into Wales, to inspect some affairs which required my presence. It was on the twentieth of September that the Macneils sailed from England; and the weather had proved squally and uncertain almost from the hour we parted. On that day week from the time we quitted Falmouth, I slept at Shrewsbury; and never in my life do I recollect a night so tremendously stormy. My thoughts were of course wholly on the Romney, the vessel on board which these dear friends

friends were embarked. I could not refrain from anticipating every thing dreadful. How curiously is the human mind affected by circumstances! I have often listened to a storm, without almost recollecting that the globe of earth contained the element of water within its frame; I have felt entranced with the hollow sound, and the furious blasts, that sung round and shook the roof that sheltered me; I have got astride in imagination upon the horses of the element, and plunged with fearful delight into the vast abyss. Now every blast of wind went to my soul. Every thought was crowded with dismal images of piercing shrieks, of cracking masts, of the last despair, of dying clasps, and a watery grave. It is in vain to endeavour to give an idea of what this night I endured. It was not fancy or loose conjecture; it was firm persuasion; I saw my friends perish;

perish; when the morning dawned, I rose with a perfect conviction that they were no more.

So deep was the suffering I endured, that I had not spirit the next morning to leave Shrewsbury, and proceed on my destined journey. I could think of nothing but the sad fate of Macneil, and affairs of business appeared wholly unworthy of attention. What a long and melancholy day did it seem! A calm had succeeded; the sun shone, and nature was cheerful; to what purpose? The sun no longer shone on Macneil!—— By the evening however, the monotony of rest became more intolerable to me than travelling; I ordered a chaise; I drove all night; and in the morning arrived at my paternal abode.

The day after my arrival I received a letter from my adored Mary. The sole topic of the letter was the storm of the

twenty-seventh. She wrote in broken sentences, with grief, with terror, with distraction. "My all," said she, "is embarked in one venture! father, mother, sisters! What infatuation prevailed upon me to separate myself from them? It is a crime, no less deep and terrible than parricide! What shall I do alone in the world? Ye wild and raging winds! Ye merciless and all-devouring waves! Ye have made me tenfold a vagabond and a beggar upon the earth! The remembrance of last Saturday is distraction to me! Would that total distraction would come, and drive all remembrance from my brain for ever!" She continued in a style no less incoherent, and seemed to be as fully impressed as myself, with the conviction that the late storm had proved fatal to her whole family.

I no sooner read the letter of Mary, than I lost no time in setting out for London,

London, that I might afford her every consolation in my power. It was particularly since this fatal prognostic had struck her, that she felt how forlorn was her situation in the family where she resided.

She had met one of the daughters upon a visit in Staffordshire; they two had been the only individuals of the party, who had not reached a demure and sober age; and for a month they had been sole companions to each other. They had sung and danced to each other; they had strolled through the meadows and reclined in the shade together; Mary had instructed her friend in botany, and her friend had been eager to learn, because she was told that botany was a fashionable accomplishment; she had in return been copious and animated in her description of the town-amusements. All this ended in the two young ladies, with that ardour and

and levity which is perhaps inseparable from youth, swearing to each other an everlasting friendship. Mary was a total stranger to every member of the family except this young lady; and the seniors complied in this point with their daughter's wishes, in inviting the youngest miss Macneil to pass the winter with them. Mr. Macneil wished for my sake to leave Mary in England, and easily turned the balance of her mind toward accepting the invitation.

For the first two or three days Mary had been delighted with the metropolis; and no doubt would have continued to be delighted for as many months, had not anxiety for the safety of her family gradually driven all other thoughts out of her mind.

At first she had conceived of a voyage at sea no otherwise, than of a journey by land; her father had been a great traveller; her mother had been in Italy; yet

yet tempests and shipwrecks had made no part of the little histories she had heard them relate of their past adventures. The ocean occupied no distinct region of her fancy; she had devoted no part of her thoughts to meditate the natural history of the world of waters. In the past years of her life she had had no interest, giving to her ideas that particular direction; she had committed no rich freightage to the mercy of the unfaithful element. Now the case was altered. She had parted with her friends in a gentle and prosperous gale; but the late squally weather had given being and substance in her mind to the phenomena of the sea. What occupied her thoughts became the theme of her tongue; but she soon found that her fashionable friend lent an idle ear to the monotonous topic. Miss Matilda Rancliffe was what is well expressed by the phrase, a fair-weather friend; she loved

no

no dismals; her step was airy; the tone of her voice was frolic and cheerful; and she owned that her sensibilities were so overpowering, as to make the impulse in her to fly from the presence of distress irresistible.

The servant at mr. Rancliffe's showed me into the drawing-room, where the whole family, with one or two visitors, was assembled. Every one was cheerful and amused; the young ladies were busy talking of a party of pleasure, and anticipating the happiness they should reap from it. I looked round the circle, and could not at first discover the object of my search. The poor Mary had withdrawn into a corner, neglecting all, and by all neglected. Her cheeks were pale; her eyes were sunk; her attitude was the attitude of despair. As soon as she saw me, she hastened to me, and led me into another room.

"Oh, sir," said she, "tell me all that

that you know, and all that you guess, respecting my poor father and mother. You, mr. Fleetwood, are acquainted with these things; you no doubt have witnessed storms at sea, and know the different coasts near which they were to pass in their voyage. Are there any hopes? Whereabout was the vessel likely to be when this storm came on? Was there ever so dreadful a tempest?" I endeavoured to encourage the unhappy orphan; I sought to inspire courage, with as much skill as it could be communicated by one who had not a spark of hope existing in his mind.

"And how, Mary," said I, "do you find yourself situated in this worthy family?" "Ah, mr. Fleetwood," replied she, with a desponding voice, "this is a sad place for me! As long as I was gay, and could join in their amusements, we went on well enough; I was a sort of favourite. But now that my heart sinks

within me, nobody cares for me; they are glad to pass me by, and crowd together in a laughing knot at the most distant part of the room. This whole family, father, mother, brothers, sisters, seem to live only for amusements. What a situation for me, who have spent my whole life in a family of love? a family, where no individual could suffer, without exciting the liveliest anxieties, and the tenderest attentions, in all the rest?"

A month longer elapsed, before we had any intelligence of the fate of the Romney. During this period, my visits to the amiable forlorn were uninterrupted. If Mary had before conceived a nascent partiality to me, it now became much stronger. The sight of me was the only pleasure the day afforded. The contrast between my sympathy and affection, and the indifference of the Ranciffes, was extreme. Into my bosom only could she pour her sorrows; in my

eye

eye only did she meet the expression of humanity. On my part, the situation was no less favourable to the growth of attachment. The sweet and affectionate disposition of Mary was conspicuous. Her desolate situation rendered her tenfold more interesting. I now felt, for the first time in my life, how delightful a task it is to console distress, when the sufferer is a woman, beautiful and young. At the proper hour I always flew to the presence of my charming ward with the most eager impatience. In general, when the mind is engaged in the performance of virtuous actions, one of the sentiments which most palpably offers itself is an honest pride. It was not pride that I felt on the present occasion. My mind was too much softened to be able to entertain so erect and prosperous a passion. There was something deliciously languid in the tone of my spirits; it was sadness, but a sadness not without

its gratifications. Sorrow brings two generous hearts nearer to each other, than joy. I was astonished, when I reflected on the ignorance in which I had lived of the most delicious emotions of the human breast, and how near I had been to going to the grave without once participating what is most precious and excellent in the life of man.

The melancholy news at length reached us, which with so sure a foresight we had anticipated. The vessel in which the family of my beloved had embarked, was tossed several days in the bay of Biscay, and at length dashed to pieces near cape Finisterre, upon the iron-fronted coast of the province of Galicia. The captain only, and a few of the officers and sailors, were saved in the long boat. They had proffered to receive two of the passengers into the boat. But this kindred of love refused to be separated; they could not endure to cast lots upon

their lives; and, rather than submit to so dire an extremity, father, mother and daughters preferred to perish together. —How painfully are we apt to reflect afterward upon a project such as this of the voyage to Italy, as partaking of the nature of suicide! If the Macneils had been content to live in England, they might have enjoyed many years of pleasure, and have been long an ornament and advantage to their species. I never from this hour recollected the scene of their embarkation, without figuring them to myself as so many victims, robed in white, and crowned with chaplets, marching along the beach, as to be sacrificed.

When the melancholy event was ascertained, it was no longer possible for Mary to continue in the family of the Rancliffes. She hired a lodging to which she retired, with only one humble female friend to accompany her.

The family who politely dismissed her, condoled with her upon her misfortune. It is impossible to conceive any thing more hard and unfeeling, than the condolences which politeness extorts on so terrible an occasion. If a man could observe, from a place of safety, the roarings of a tiger, as he tore the palpitating limbs of his own brother, they would scarcely jar more painfully on the sense. The adieux of the Rancliffes said but too plainly, As soon as we have shut the door on you and your woes, we purpose to forget that there is any such being in the world.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XVIII.

I WAS now poor Mary's only visitor. I shall not undertake to detail the progress of our amour under these tragical circumstances. For a long time, though our courtship substantially proceeded, no word of love, or hope, or of prospect to the future, fell from my lips. If I had attempted to utter such a word, I should have felt it like sacrilege; and I am sure the pure and affectionate heart of Mary would have sustained such a shock, as must ultimately have proved a bar to our union for ever. No; she regarded me merely as a zealous guardian, and a faithful protector. She saw in me her father's friend; and, as I seemed busy in performing the functions of that friend to his surviving representative, she honoured

noured me for my fidelity, she felt toward me an increasing reverence, and had no thought nearer her heart than the gratifying my wishes, and anticipating my requests. The passion of the sexes will perhaps infallibly grow up between male and female, wherever they are much together, and feel much mutual approbation, provided they are impressed with no adverse prepossessions, and there is nothing in the discipline and decorums of society that forbids and sets a brand on its completion. The melancholy too that hung over our interviews, softened our minds, and prepared them for tender and passionate feelings.

One further misfortune impended over my ward; for such by the most sacred obligations she was now become. Her father, as I have said, had converted his whole property into money, which he lodged, previously to his embarkation, in a banking-house in Genoa. He of course

course received, in the due forms practised on such occasions, two complete duplicates of the titles or instruments by which he or his representative might claim the property at Genoa on producing the said titles or instruments. These duplicates were inclosed in two boxes of ebony, in figure and appearance perfectly similar. One of them mr. Macneil designed to take with him on board the Romney, that he might employ his fortune in the purchases he meditated, with the least possible delay; the other was to be left in my hands, with a view to any possible accident or miscarriage. I was present with my friend, when he closed and sealed his different packages, the last day but two before he left the Windermere. We read over on that occasion the papers received from the Genoese banker. The room in which we sat was crowded with trunks and boxes, some already locked, others

others waiting for their last complement. In the middle of the room was a large table, covered with valuable trinkets, bank-notes, money, books of accounts, and packets of papers of a thousand denominations. Suddenly Macneil was summoned out of the room, to speak to a land-bailiff or tradesman of some sort, who had come for the second time upon some trifling and vexatious question. Before he left the room, my friend hastened to put away his most important papers. He closed the two boxes of ebony, and carefully placed some other papers in a trunk which was near him. His seal lay on the table; and, taking it in his hand, he requested me to affix it where it was wanting. In all this he seemed to proceed so cautiously, as to leave my mind entirely free from suspicion; while at the same time his attention was really engaged by another subject. This is the only account

I can

I can give of the affair. The trunks were opened no more. One of the ebony-boxes, together with the rest of the packages, was finally conveyed on board the Romney: the other, as was previously determined, remained in my possession. When, in consequence of the shipwreck in which Macneil perished (for he had placed a will he had lately made in my hands, and had appointed me, in conjunction with an eminent barrister at law, his executor), I broke the seal, and opened the box which was supposed to contain the title and instruments of his fortune, now become the fortune of his surviving child, I found it entirely empty.

I was thunderstruck with this circumstance. I entered into a correspondence with the banker at Genoa; I afterward commenced a law-suit against him. His answers to my letters were cautiously and artfully expressed; they avoided

saying any thing directly, respecting the sum of sixty thousand pounds sterling which I stated mr. Macneil to have remitted; the writer intrenched himself in the forms and language of business; he said that he should be glad to see the titles and instruments on which I founded so considerable a claim; but, till he saw them, he could deliver no opinion on the matter. As this detestable correspondence proceeded, and in proportion as he felt himself more secure of his ground, he assumed a loftier and more insolent tone. He was astonished that I should trouble him with repeated applications in an affair which he knew nothing of, and required that I should desist from such extraordinary and discreditable importunities. This may well appear to the reader somewhat wonderful: the banker who committed this enormous fraud had hitherto borne an unimpeachable character: all I can say is,

is, that the temptation was probably too large for his sentiments of integrity. I may be permitted, as a misanthrope, to remark, that the integrity of too many men has its limits, and that it is to be feared there have been bankers, even in England, who would have sold themselves to the devil for sixty thousand pounds.—The fact is however, in a word, that the property of the Macneils was never recovered.

I have often thought it was fortunate for me, that I and my good friend, the Genoese banker, were not inhabitants of the same country. It was certainly in some measure an issue of character that was tried between us. I do believe that, if the Genoese had not entertained the hope of keeping his reputation as well as the money, he would have paid Mary her fortune. What applause would he have obtained, if he had disbursed out of his coffers sixty thousand pounds, which,

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as every one who repeated the story would have been forward to remark, he was not obliged to pay! On the other hand, what a villain was I, if, on false or uncertain grounds, I charged him with fraudulently detaining so enormous a sum! I must take care, as he observed to me in some of his letters, how I advanced an accusation against him, tending to subvert the whole basis of his transactions, without having in my possession documents by which it could be supported. The good Genoese, as I afterward learned, made out a plausible and even pathetic story, to his acquaintance and friends, of the injury he sustained. It might, he said, have been the intention of the unhappy gentleman who was lost at sea, to have vested this property in his hands; the more was his misfortune that he never received it! Sixty thousand pounds however was a large sum; he had never in the whole

course of his business held cash to that amount, at one time, for any one individual; and he took upon him to doubt from every thing he had heard, whether the deceased had ever been worth half the sum. It was a hard thing indeed, to be made accountable for money he never saw, and to be called a cheat and a villain unless he would give away half his estate; and, though he trusted in the equity of the laws of Genoa to protect his fortune, and in the candour of his countrymen to vindicate his character, yet the uneasiness which the rashness of this Englishman, to say the least of it, had given his mind, was such as no vindication could ever compensate.—I am not sure, if I had gone at this time to Genoa, whether I should not have been publicly hooted, as I passed along the streets.

Yet, in reality, spite of the loss of these important instruments, I had documents

cuments left, sufficient to justify me in the mind of every impartial observer. The amount of mr. Macneil's fortune was of course a matter that had been sufficiently obvious to many. This fortune could not suddenly be annihilated. The Milanese friend of Macneil was ready to attest that it had been his purpose to lodge his property in this house, and that he certainly believed, he had done so. He produced a letter in which the fact was strongly implied, though it was not affirmed in words that admitted not of debate. In his will my friend described the receipt of the sum as being acknowledged by the banker, and entered into some detail as to the number and titles of the instruments under which he claimed.

But all this was not sufficient to procure a decree in my favour before the Genoese magistrates. The Italian lawyers observed, that a description of property in a man's

a man's will, was the most unlike thing in the world to a title to an estate; and that, if such a doctrine, as this claim turned on, were admitted, which they well knew the equity of the bench before which they pleaded would reject with indignation, every man who pleased, in every country of Europe, might bequeath his daughter sixty thousand pounds, not only from their client, but from every banking, and even considerable mercantile, house within the limits of the republic. They dwelt at great length upon the high character for integrity, which had ever been preserved by the commercial class of the citizens of Genoa, a class, which was well known to consist principally of the most ancient and honourable nobility in the world; they expatiated pathetically upon the virtues, the charities, the devotion, and the unblemished life of their client, and the agonies his pure and uncorrupted mind

mind had suffered from so foul an imputation; and they earnestly called on the court by their present decree to vindicate, not the defendant only, whose character in this case had been grievously aspersed, but the whole state, from the suspicion that such a crime could have been so much as conceived by one of her citizens.—Their exertions and eloquence were crowned with the most entire success.

I hesitated long to disclose to the unfortunate Mary the new calamity which hung over her. One consideration at length decided me to make her of council in the controversy that was going on. I found her mind dwelling with incessant anguish on the image of her departed kindred. She refused all amusement and avocations. The employments, which had lately been so dear, were now loathsome to her. The fields and the garden had no charms. Her spirits and her

her appetite deserted her. I saw that there was no chance of recalling her to life, but by giving her some object to which she could not refuse to attend. I believe the loss of her fortune of sixty thousand pounds, was the direct means by which she was preserved from the grave.

At first she declared in the most peremptory manner, that she would listen to nothing that related to the goods of life. What were the means of life to her, when she was already bereaved of every thing that made life worth having! It was a pleasure to her to conceive, that, when she lost parents and sisters, she had nothing left! There was something soothing in the idea, that the same billows which had devoured her dearest relatives, had swallowed up their wealth, and left her a helpless beggar in the world!

By degrees I recalled her to a sounder mind.

mind. I represented to her the importance of wealth, and the duty which prescribed the preservation and right disposition of it. With the fortune which had thus devolved to her, how respectable might she become! She might maintain a houshold of temperate and happy individuals. She might relieve the wants of multitudes, might unfold talent, encourage industry, and multiply around her the class of sober and honourable citizens in the state. Even the inherent qualities which she or any other individual possessed, were illustrated, when they appeared in conjunction with the goods of fortune. The merits of the poor man were always clouded, undervalued, and baffled of their utility; while those of the rich were illuminated with the beams of applause, and enabled to appear with tenfold effect upon the theatre of society. I further reminded her of the guilt she would incur,

cur, if, instead of endeavouring to make a proper use of the wealth which had devolved to her, she suffered it, by any negligence of hers, to become the prize of profligacy and fraud, and to be administered in the depraved manner which such dispositions would dictate.

I prevailed on the sorrowing maid to suffer me to bring to her the barrister, who was the joint executor of her father's will. We read together, in her presence, the letters which had relation to the subject. We canvassed the evidence, nuncupatory and scriptory, which might be made useful in the cause. We brought together in her apartments a consultation of English lawyers, with whom we thought it necessary to advise as to the measures to be pursued. Add to this, that the letters, which from time to time reached us from the Genoese banker, and from the lawyers it was necessary for us to retain in that city, both

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when they were expected, and when they arrived, kept alive our interest, and furnished topics for our conversation. A law-suit is like an adventure in a gaming transaction; the mind is continually upon the stretch, the affair from day to day assumes a new face, hope and fear dance an alternate measure before the eyes, and we are now sanguine with expectation, and now speechless and dejected with intolerable despair. How many waking and anxious nights may he expect to pass, who, from choice or necessity, is obliged to commit his property to the discussions of the wrangling bar!—The degree of uneasiness, which is inseparable from an affair of this sort, was, as I have already said, salutary to Mary, and served by imperceptible degrees to bring her back to the considerations of the world.

Here then was a strange series of vicissitudes in the pecuniary fortune of my

destined

destined bride. When I had first contemplated marriage with her, she was one of three coheiresses merely, of a man of a given fortune, who might expect on the day of her marriage to receive a certain portion, and, after the death of her parents, to divide in equal allotments the property which they possessed. In the few days that elapsed between the melancholy intelligence of the loss of her family, and the period when it became necessary to look into the affairs of my deceased friend, she stood forth the undoubted successor to his ample property. I never had been, in any occurrence of my life, a mercenary character; and I doubt whether, in any moment of these few days, the idea of Mary's accession of property offered itself to my thoughts; certainly it was very far from being among the early suggestions inspired by this melancholy catastrophe. But, after this, there was a long time, nearly a year, before

before the question was finally set at rest (the action indeed was not dismissed by the Italian courts under two years; but I had, before that, resolutely driven the expectation of any advantage to result, from my thoughts); and during this period, amidst the various fluctuations of our cause, and the sanguine hopes which were occasionally held out to me, the successive images of my mistress, as the possessor of an ample property, and a beggar, could not but forcibly present themselves to my apprehension.

What a strange thing is the human mind! Of what consequence was it to me, whether the amiable and accomplished woman I married, were, or were not, amply endowed with the goods of fortune? I had already enough for every honest and honourable purpose in life. Fortune could not make her more amiable and accomplished than she was: adversity could take nothing from her.

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I can safely declare that I never repined for a moment, that she gave me her hand, without bringing me a shilling. Yet I am formed like all other corporeal essences, and am affected by the adventitious and unmeriting circumstances of rank or riches with which my fellow-being is surrounded. Had Mary entered into my alliance a distinguished heiress, this, in spite of my philosophy, would have commanded from me a certain deference and homage. As she was, penyless, a mere pensionary on my bounty, —I swear I did not value her less,—I felt more tenderness, more humanity, a more religious kind of forbearance toward her. But the sentiment was of a different sort; her first claim was upon my pity. I experienced this a hundred times, when I hastened to pay her my customary visit. When I waited upon her as an heiress, I approached with a certain submission; I looked at her as

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an independent being; my thoughts moved slow, and my tongue was apt to falter, if I suggested to her any idea of a freer and more unceremonious sort. When I visited her portionless, my mind moved freer; I breathed a thinner and more elastic atmosphere; my tongue assumed a tone of greater confidence; and, at the same time that I felt for her the deepest compassion and the most entire sympathy, my speech became more eloquent, and I caught myself talking with the condescension of a superior,—superior in the possession of that sordid dirt, which the system of human things much oftener bestows upon a driveller or a knave, than upon a being of genuine excellence and worth.

Another idea of a subtler nature offered itself to my thoughts, which I will state here, as calculated to illustrate the whimsical composition of the human mind. I felt that, in consequence of the

the heavy calamity which had overtaken this beautiful orphan, it was become doubly incumbent on me that I should marry her. She was left, by a deplorable and astonishing event, desolate upon the stage of the world; and she was in all moral and religious obligation entitled to the full benefit of my fortune. But this is not exactly the idea to which I refer. An ample property of sixty thousand pounds had unaccountably disappeared. What was become of it? I charged the malversation on the Genoese banker: he denied the charge. The question was at issue before the laws and lawyers of his country: it was probable that the accused would ultimately be acquitted. He would be acquitted, because I had no sufficient evidence to exhibit, to substantiate the assertion. Well then; here was a horrible fraud which had been perpetrated. As I charged it on the banker, might not another charge

it on me? I had been trusted by Macneil in all his affairs; there was no apparent individual to whom the guilt could belong, but the Genoese or myself. He had no more visible temptation than I. His opulence was not less; and, like me, he was childless and a bachelor; it was generally believed that, when he died, he would bequeath his property to the church. But, if the fraud were mine, how much more complicated would be my guilt! I was the friend of the deceased, the Genoese a stranger; I had been fixed on by Macneil, as the select depositary of his interests. Then imagine for a moment, how inexpressible must be the height of my profligacy, if, conscious to myself that I alone was guilty of the embezzlement, I deliberately charged it upon another, and solemnly prosecuted the charge! Imagine what the guilt must be, of stripping a wealthy orphan, left

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in my guardianship, of her property, at the same moment that fate had robbed her of her natural protectors, and of thus turning her forth pennyless, to seek the means of a wretched subsistence!

These, it will be said, are but wild and air-drawn pictures. I had passed through the world with an unimpeached reputation: the integrity and liberality of my transactions were known to every one that had heard of my name; no creature would ever dream of suspecting me of so flagitious an action. Be it so. A man is diversely viewed by the variously circumstanced inhabitants of the globe. Milton is known to one man merely as the Latin translator to a secretary of state; and the nurse of La Fontaine interrupted his confessor, who was setting before him on his death-bed the terrors of another world, with the exclamation, "For Christ's sake, do not disturb the poor wretch; he is less

knave than fool; God can never have the heart to damn him." Such was my temper, that I could not sleep tranquilly upon my pillow, while I thought it possible that a native of Genoa or Peru should regard me as a villain, pampering my own follies and depraved propensities with the purloined property of another.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XIX.

Let me not be misunderstood. Let it not be supposed that the passion and determination of my mind in favour of this charming girl were less fervent than they ever had been. On the contrary she became every hour more interesting to me. While she sat like Niobe, her whole soul dissolved in tears for the untimely destruction of her family, it was impossible not to feel in its utmost energy the wish, Might I be your comforter! In proportion as she gained the power of attending in some degree to the objects before her, her intercourse gave me nameless emotions. There was a gentle sweetness in her manner, that I never saw in any other human creature. I remembered her gay and active and spirited;

ed; it was now a faint and undefined image of these qualities that presented itself, a sun that yielded an uncertain beam, amidst the mass of clouds that sought to overwhelm it. That transparent complexion, that countenance in which, like a book, the spectator might read every emotion and temporary impulse of the soul, rendered every state of mind of the angelic creature to whom it belonged interesting. When the first faint smile, after the death of her father, illumined her features, it struck me like a resurrection from the dead: my sensations were such as those which Admetus must have felt, when Hercules brought back to him his heroic consort from the regions of Pluto. There was something too aerial, too subtle, too heavenly in her countenance, to be properly the attribute of a terrestrial being. The glories of Elysium seemed to hang round her. Poor Mary had nothing on

earth

earth left her to love, but me; and she felt toward me as toward father, mother, sisters in one. Nothing could be so delicate and flattering to me, as the whole of her demeanour; and every demonstration of this sort had a double price, as it appeared a gentle and voluntary and cheerful restraint upon the state of her mind, so much taken away from the dead to give to the living.

Thus we passed the winter. The cheerful blaze of our quiet hearth compensated for the driving hail and snow which raged without. Gradually I endeavoured to engage the attention of my charmer with indifferent objects. I adorned her apartments with the most beautiful products of the gardener's care I was able to procure. I obtained some for her which she had never seen before. She instructed me in botany; she brought forth her port-folios, and showed me her charming drawings. I called her

her attention to the beauties of the English writers from Queen Elizabeth to the Civil War, writers who had always appeared to me to surpass those of any other age or country. It was one of the agreeable attributes of this winter, that our interviews were never broken in upon by any accidental interloper. One peaceful hour of animated disquisition, or soothing remission, passed away after another, unmarked. When I saw my adorable ward, if not happy, at least peaceful and pleased, my heart beat with honest exultation, and I said, This is my work! she was willing to yield equal credit to my exertions. It was the work of nature! Time, youth and health inevitably did so much for my patient, that there was little left for me, her soul's physician, to effect. If the intercourse and position I have described would have been delightful to any one with the soul of a man, imagine what they were

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to me, who, from the hour of my birth till now, had never experienced the sweets of honourable love.

A brilliant and genial spring succeeded the winter. I had never felt this interesting period of the awakening of the universe from its torpor, so deeply as now. Nature became restored to life and the pulses of life, and my charmer sympathised with the general tone of created things. During the winter I had never ventured to propose to her a visit to any of the scenes of public amusement which the metropolis affords; no one could have looked in her face, and started the proposition; it would have been treason to the majesty of her grief; it would have been sacrilege, to bring forward the dejected mourner amidst the hardened gaiety and indifference of an assembly, or the unhallowed jests and obstreperous mirth of a theatre. An excursion into the country is an amuse-

ment of a different sort. Nature in her gayest scenes is never drunken and tumultuous. A cheerful sobriety is their characteristic. When I escape from the multitude, and hasten to her retreats, I am never incommoded with obtrusive and discordant sounds; all around me is silent; or, if any thing is heard, it is the rustling of the wind, or the uncouth warblings of the feathered tribe; even the lowing of the herds is sweet; and if I were placed amidst a forest of wild beasts, I should find, could I divest myself of the terror they excite, that the mighty master had tempered their roarings, till they afforded a sublime mellowness, not unpleasing to the ear.

The soft tints of the morning had a staid liveliness in them which led my poor Mary out of herself, ere she was aware. The air had a sweet alacrity which she could not resist. "Mr. Fleetwood," said she, "your attentions are a thou-

a thousand times greater than I deserve. Had they a character of obtrusiveness and command, I should know what part to take. But I can discover nothing in them which betrays that you think of gratification to yourself; you appear to be the soul of humanity and tenderness. I should be the most ungrateful creature in the world, if I did not accept your solicitudes for my health and invitations to the air, or if I refused to smile, when nature and Fleetwood summon me to smile."

We made a tour in succession to almost all the environs of the metropolis. If one is content to give up the demand for the wild, the majestic and awful in scenery, I know of no city, the neighbourhood of which affords a greater variety of rich and beautiful and animated spots, than London. The Thames is the great wealth of this vicinity. What can be more striking than the crowd of

masts and vessels of various sizes, as discovered from Greenwich, or the frolic meandrings of this rural stream, as it shows itself at Richmond? What objects can be more unlike than these two? If you recede from the river, Sydenham, and Epsom, and Esher, and Hampstead, and Hendon, and twenty other delightful scenes, are ready to advance their several claims for the prize of beauty. Let not my readers wonder at this enumeration, which to some of them may perhaps appear trite. Let them recollect that with every one of these places I associate some interesting scene of courtship, which renders the remembrance dear to me. Let them be thankful that I dismiss this part of my narrative so lightly. If I were to enlarge upon the history of this beautiful spring, and relate at length the pleasing incidents which occurred, particularly at Epsom and Richmond, instead of consecrating

a page

a page to this topic, I should fill volumes.

In the month of July I became a husband. When a sufficient period had elapsed to make my poor Mary feel that she belonged in some measure to the world, she was too ingenuous not to disdain the forms and semblances of grief. As she had scarcely any visitor beside myself, it became proper that we should, as soon as might be, put an end to this equivocal situation, upon which the good-natured world is always eager to interpose its constructions. "My beloved Fleetwood," said Mary, "I feel that I love you to the full as much, I believe more, than I could love a man of my own age. The sentiment that I feel for you has a sort of religion in it, which renders it a thousand times sweeter, and more soothing to my heart. I reverence, at the same time that I love you. I shall be infinitely more reluctant to wound

wound you, and more solicitous for your peace, than I should be, if you were a youth in the full revelry and exuberance of the morning of life. In all partnership engagements, there must be a subordination. If I had a young husband, I might perhaps sometimes be presumptuous enough to estimate his discernment at no higher a rate than my own; but the case is otherwise now. Mistake me not, my dear Fleetwood. I am not idle and thoughtless enough, to promise to sink my being and individuality in yours. I shall have my distinct propensities and preferences. Nature has moulded my mind in a particular way; and I have of course my tastes, my pleasures, and my wishes, more or less different from those of every other human being. I hope you will not require me to disclaim them. In me you will have a wife, and not a passive machine. But, whenever a question occurs of reflection, of experience, of judgment,

ment, or of prudential consideration, I shall always listen to your wisdom with undissembled deference. In every thing indifferent, or that can be made so, I shall obey you with pleasure. And in return I am sure you will consider me as a being to be won with kindness, and not dictated to with the laconic phrase of authority.

"Yet I am sorry, my dear love, that you should marry a woman who has suffered so cruelly as I have done. My father's advice to you was, 'Fleetwood, if you marry, chuse a girl, whom no disappointments have soured, and no misfortunes have bent to the earth.' Fleetwood, you must not be angry with me, if I sometimes recollect that my father, mother, and sisters, all perished together by an untimely and tragical fate. Peaceful and serene as I may appear to you, I bear a wound in my breast, which may be skinned over, and seem as if it were

were cured, but which will occasionally break out afresh, and produce symptoms of fever, impatience and despair. How exquisite are the various charities of human life! From the most venerable of these, those which are entailed upon us without asking our leave, and are stamped with the highest sanctity, I am cut off for ever. I am like a being who, by some severe ordination of providence, is destined to stand alone, to know no kindred, to have no alliance or connection, but what my own election and voluntary engagement may eventually supply. If you should fail me, Fleetwood!——I have faults; you unquestionably have faults too. You are difficult to be pleased; I see it; my father told me so; my powers of pleasing, perhaps my inclination to please, have their limits. If you should fail me, I have no one to fly to; I shall remain a solitary monument of despair! These thoughts

thoughts will sometimes intrude, and make me sad. Other persons lose their relations one by one; they are gradually broken in to their forlorn situation. I was overwhelmed at once: and never, so long as I shall continue to exist, shall I recover this terrible stroke.

"But why do I thus cheat my sorrows, by dwelling in general propositions! If my lost relatives had been otherwise than they were, I could have borne it, I ought to have borne it. Fleetwood, you knew them! No, never was there such a father, such a mother, such sisters. How we loved each other! How happy we made each other, and what powers we had of contributing to each other's happiness!— Barbara! Amelia! my father! my mother! If I dwell upon the horrible theme I shall go distracted!—Fleetwood, how I wish that I too could commit myself to the mercy of the ocean! When the thought of my

own

own death rises to my mind, it never comes in so soothing a form as if I imagine it to happen by drowning. Believe me, there is nothing I so earnestly pray for, as that this may be the means by which I may cease to exist. I should not feel it as death; it would be a reunion to all I love!

Life is the desert; life the solitude.
This mingles me with all my soul has lov'd:
'Tis to be borne to sisters and to parents;
'Tis to rejoin the stock from which I sprung,
And be again in Nature!"

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XX.

From the church of St. George's, Hanover Square, where the marriage ceremony was performed, we set out for the baths of Matlock in Derbyshire, where we staid an entire month. This was the happiest month of my life. My dear Mary became placid and cheerful; without forgetting the terrible calamity which the last autumn had brought upon her, she opened her heart to the gratifications which were before her; she felt that, in the solemn contract she had formed, she had undertaken in some degree for my satisfaction and tranquillity, and she was determined to watch over her trust. Nor will I be guilty of the false modesty to insinuate, that she did this merely as the discharge of

of a duty; on the contrary, I was so fortunate as to interest and please her. This she manifested by a thousand flattering symptoms, attentions which can flow only from the heart, and which the head can never supply. Nor let it be forgotten that, though I was now somewhat beyond the meridian of life, I was not destitute of many advantages, calculated to recommend me to a delicate and refined female companion. My person was pleasing, and my demeanour graceful; circumstances which had acquired me in Paris the appellation of *the handsome Englishman*. That very sensibility which constituted the torment of my life, gave a feeling sweetness to the tones of my voice, and a gentleness to my attentions, such as are found peculiarly acceptable to the better order of females.

If Mary was cheerful and pleased, the happiness I felt is such as cannot be described.

scribed. What a contrast did there exist between the tumultuous scenes of my Parisian amours, and my relative situation with the accomplished female whom I had now made my wife! The women I had loved, furiously and distractedly loved, in the early period of my life, I had never esteemed. How could I? They had each a husband; they had each children. How can a woman discharge the duties of these sacred relations, at the same time that she is amusing herself with the wishes, or gratifying the appetites, of a lover? The idea is too shocking to be dwelt upon! She puts off the matron, to play the wild and loose-hearted coquette. She presents to her husband the offspring of her criminal amours, and calls it his. All her life is a cheat, one uninterrupted tissue of falshoods and hypocrisy. Can she tell her thoughts? She, who has not a single thought which, though it may be tolerated

rated in silence, would not, if uttered in appropriate language, make every one of her acquaintance turn to marble at the sound. Esteem her! She is not worthy to live; or, if to live, to be confined in some cloister of penitents, where rigid discipline and coarse attire, and scanty fare, might at length purge her of that ferment in her blood, or that giddy intoxication of thought, which at present renders her the blot of her sex, and the disgrace of the marriage tie!

There are persons who sport the opinion, that the pleasure which is gained by stealth, is the genuine pleasure, and that the prohibition which waits upon the indulgence, gives it its highest zest. It is not so! This opinion is not more pernicious in its tendency, than it is ridiculous in the grounds upon which it rests. What, is it the consciousness of crime, that makes our pleasure? the fear, which continually haunts us with a

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presentiment that we shall be detected? the cowardice, that forces our countenance to fall in the presence of our fellow-men, and makes a hundred accidental and harmless remarks in conversation or in public, enter like a sword into our vitals? the fearful struggle for ever repeated within us, which leads us to do the thing we condemn, and repine over our weakness that we do it?

No; it is innocence that is the soul of pleasure, with which the sentiment of shame is incompatible. The truly happy man lifts up his face with serenity, and challenges the eyes of all the world. Without frankness, without a conscience void of offence, without a feeling that the being I love is of a worthy nature, and that no one can stand up and say "In consulting your own inclination you have done me unmanly wrong," there cannot be the "sunshine of the soul." Most especially in the connection

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of sex with sex, it is necessary to substantial enjoyment, that virtue should spread the couch, and that honour and peace of mind should close the curtains. The kiss of honest love, how rapturous! But the true ingredients in this rapture are, a heart-felt esteem of each other's character, a perception that, while the eye we see sparkles, and the cheek glows, with affection, the glow is guiltless of any unhallowed and licentious propensity; in fine, the soothing state of mind which tells us that, while we freely indulge the impulses of our heart, we are not disgracing, but honouring, the mighty power by which we exist. To recollect that neither my own character, nor that of the partner of my joys, is injured, but improved, by the scope of our mutual partialities, is the crown of social pleasure. To persons thus attached, thus bound in honourable connection, each day may be expected to

add to their enjoyment, and increase the kindness and esteem with which they regard each other.

To me the situation was new, was such as I had not anticipated, and was so much the more enchanting to me. I had lived long in the world, and I had lived alone. My soul panted for a friend, and I had never found such a friend as it demanded, a friend "who should be to me as another self, who should joy in all my joys, and grieve in all my sorrows, and whose sympathy should be incapable of being changed by absence into smiles, while my head continued bent to the earth with anguish." I had not been aware that nature has provided a substitute in the marriage-tie, for this romantic, if not impossible friendship. The love which Pythias is said to have borne for Damon, or Theseus for Pirithous, many a married pair have borne

for each other. The difference of sex powerfully assists the intimacy; similarity of character can never unite two parties so closely, as the contrast of masculine enterprise in one, and a defenceless tenderness in the other. Man and wife, if they love, must love each other vehemently. Their interests are in almost all cases united. If they have children, these children form a new bond, either party pursues the same end, and has its affections directed towards the same object. Independently of this, whatever contributes to the welfare of the one is advantageous to the other, and the calamity or death of either is a kind of destruction which overtakes the by-stander. Habit assists the mutual dependence; and very often it happens that, when a wedded pair has lived for a long series of years together, the death of the feebler of the two is only a signal calling on the

other to be gone, that he survives but a few days, and they are deposited at the same moment in a common grave.

Thus does the system of things of which we are a part supply our inherent deficiencies, and conscious, as it were, in how small a degree we are adapted for sublime virtues, assist, by a sort of mechanical link, in the construction of that vivid and unremitting attachment which the human heart demands.

To me, who had been accustomed to live alone with dependents, with acquaintance, and with servants, how delicious were the attentions of a beautiful and accomplished woman, whose interests were for ever united with my own! A servant dares not, and an acquaintance but coldly performs the ordinary duty of enquiring after your health, and sending you forth to the occupations of the day crowned with their good wishes. How pleasing to be an object of interest

and concern to the person whom I deeply esteem and fervently love! How delicious the eye that glistens with pleasure to hail my return, and the cheek that reddens with kindness! It is this which constitutes the unspeakable charm of home. My home is not a fabric of walls which shelters me; is not even the windows, the furniture, the elbow-chair, and the mute fire-side, which habit has endeared and hung round with a thousand pleasing associations; it is that there I find the countenance that gladdens at my approach, and the heart that welcomes me. The affection of Mary I felt as a charm reconciling me to life; it gave me value in my own eyes, to observe her beautiful and well-proportioned presence, her speaking eye, her lucid complexion, and to say, To the soul that inhabits there I am of importance; she is cheerful, because I am happy and well; if I perished, she

would feel she had lost every thing! How flattering to the human heart, that there is a being, and a noble one, whom with one accent of my voice I can delight, with one glance of my eye I can fill with sweet content! My tenants loved me, because I had power; my acquaintance, because I could contribute to their entertainment; the poor who dwelt near my mansion, for my wealth; but my wife would love me in sickness or in health, in poverty, in calamity, in total desolation!

While we resided at Matlock, we visited the beauties and romantic scenery of Derbyshire. I was familiarly acquainted with the whole before, and I now performed the office of *cicerone* and interpreter to Mary. But how different were the sensations with which I now visited each charming, or each wonderful scene! Even a bright and spirit-stirring morn, did not now stir in me a contemplative and

and solitary spirit; it turned my eye on my companion, it awakened us to the interchange of cheerful and affectionate looks, it tipt our tongues with many a pleasant sally, and many a tender and sympathetic expression. When we looked down upon the rich and fertile plains, when we hung over the jutting and tremendous precipice, I perceived with inexpressible pleasure, that mine was no longer a morose and unparticipated sensation, but that another human creature, capable of feeling all my feelings, rejoiced and trembled along with me. When I retired to my inn after the fatigues and dangers of the day, I did not retire to a peevish and froward meal among drawers and venal attendants; I sat down with the companion of my heart, and shared the pleasures of idleness, as we had before shared the pleasures of activity. How many agreeable topics of conversation did the rivers and

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the mountains suggest; how many occasions of mutual endearment did they afford! It seemed that the spirit of kindness still gained new strength, as the scene was perpetually shifted before our eyes, and as we breathed an atmosphere for ever new.

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